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THE WORKS

OF

JOHN ADAMS.

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and the States of Holland

7 October 1782

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN ADAMS,

SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY

HIS GRANDSON

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

VOL. VIII.

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OFFICIAL

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AND

PUBLIC PAPERS.

CONTINUED.

PUBLIC PAPERS.

CONTINUED.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 8 November, 1782.

Sir, — In one of your letters you suppose, that I have an open, avowed contempt of all rank. Give me leave to say, you are much mistaken in my sentiments. There are times, and I have often seen such, when a man's duty to his country demands of him the sacrifice of his rank, as well as his fortune and life; but this must be an epoch, and for an object worthy of the sacrifice. In ordinary times, the same duty to his country obliges him to contend for his rank, as the only means indeed, sometimes, by which he can do service; and the sacrifice would injure his country more than himself. When the world see a man reduced to the necessity of giving up his rank, merely to serve the public, they will respect him, and his opinions will have the more weight for it; but when the same world see a man yield his rank for the sake of holding a place, he becomes ridiculous. This, you may depend upon it, will not be my case.

Ranks, titles, and etiquettes, and every species of punctilios, even down to the visits of cards, are of infinitely more importance in Europe than in America, and therefore congress cannot be too tender of disgracing their ministers abroad in any of these things, nor too determined not to disgrace themselves. Congress will, sooner or later, find it necessary to adjust the rank of all their servants, with relation to one another, as well as to the magistrates and officers of the separate governments.

For example, if, when congress abolished my commission to the King of Great Britain, and my commission for peace, and issued a new commission for peace, in which they associated four other gentlemen with me, they had placed any other at the head of the commission, they would have thrown a disgrace and ridicule upon me in Europe, that I could not have withstood. It would have injured me in the minds of friends and enemies, the French and Dutch, as well as the English.

It is the same thing with States. If Mr. Jay and I had yielded the punctilio of rank, and taken the advice of the Count de Vergennes and Dr. Franklin, by treating with the English or Spaniards, before we were put upon the equal footing that our rank demanded, we should have sunk in the minds of the English, French, Spaniards, Dutch, and all the neutral powers. The Count de Vergennes certainly knows this; if he does not, he is not even a European statesman; if he does know it, what inference can we draw, but that he means to keep us down if he can; to keep his hand under our chin to prevent us from drowning, but not to lift our heads out of water?

The injunctions upon us to communicate, and to follow the advice that is given us, seem to be too strong and too universal. Understood with reasonable limitations and restrictions, they may do very well. For example, I wrote a speculation, and caused it to be printed in the *Courier du Bas Rhin*, showing the interest, policy, and humanity of the neutral confederation's acknowledging American independence, and admitting the United States to subscribe to the principles of their marine treaty. This was reprinted in the Gazette of Leyden, the *Politique Hollandais*, the *Courier de l'Europe*, and all the Dutch gazettes. At the same time I caused to be transmitted to England some pieces on the same subject, and further showing the probability that the neutral powers might adopt this measure, and the impolicy of Great Britain, in permitting all the powers of Europe to get the start of her, and having more merit with America than she, by acknowledging her independence first. These pieces were printed in the English papers, in the form of letters to the Earl of Shelburne, and can never be controverted, because they are in writing and in print with their dates. These fears thus excited, added to our refusal to treat on an unequal footing, probably produced his lordship's resolution, to advise

the King to issue the commission, under the great seal, to Mr. Oswald, by which Great Britain has got the start, and gone to the windward of the other European powers. No man living, but myself, knew that all these speculations, in various parts of Europe, came from me. Would it do for me to communicate all this to the French ministers? Is it possible for me to communicate all these things to congress? Believe me, it is not; and give me leave to say, it will not do to communicate them to my friend the Chevalier de la Luzerne, nor my friend M. Marbois. If they should be, long letters will lay all open to the Count de Vergennes, who, I assure you, I do not believe will assist me or anybody else in such measures of serving our country. When the French ministers in America or Europe communicate every thing to us, we may venture to be equally communicative with them. But when every thing is concealed from us more cautiously than it is from England, we shall do ourselves injustice if we are not upon our guard.

If we conduct ourselves with caution, prudence, moderation, and firmness, we shall succeed in every great point; but if congress or their ministers abroad suffer themselves to be intimidated by threats, slanders, or insinuations, we shall be duped out of the fishery, the Mississippi, much of the western lands, compensation to the tories, and Penobscot at least, if not Kennebec. This is my solemn opinion, and I will never be answerable to my country, posterity, or my own mind, for the consequences that might happen from concealing it.

It is for the determinate purpose of carrying these points, that one man, who is submission itself, is puffed up to the top of Jacob's ladder in the clouds, and every other man depressed to the bottom of it in the dust. This is my opinion. If it is a crime to hold this opinion, let me be punished for it, for assuredly I am guilty.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 11 November, 1782.

Sir, — On my first arrival at Paris, I found my colleagues engaged in conferences with Mr. Oswald. They had been

before chiefly conducted by Mr. Jay, Dr. Franklin having been mostly confined for three months by a long and painful illness. At this time, however, he was so much better, although still weak and lame, as to join us in most of the subsequent conferences, and we were so constantly engaged, forenoon, afternoon, and evening, that I had not been out to Versailles nor anywhere else.

On Saturday last, the Marquis de Lafayette called upon me, and told me he had been to Versailles, and the Count de Vergennes had said to him, that he had been informed by the returns of the police that I was in Paris, but not officially, and he should take it well if I would come to see him. I went out to dine with Dr. Franklin the same day, who had just returned from delivering his memorial, and repeated to me the same message. I said to both, I would go the next morning; and accordingly on Sunday, the 9th, I went to make my court to his Excellency.

He received me politely, and asked me questions about our progress. I answered him, that the English minister appeared to me to divide with us upon ostensible points; that I still doubted his intentions to make a universal peace; that the cry of the nation was for something to be done or said with the American ministers, and to satisfy this, the King of Great Britain had been advised to be the third power in Europe to acknowledge our independence. As this was a royal act under the great seal of his kingdom, it could never be denied or revoked; but still it did not render the nation unanimous, and to avoid finally disgusting any great party, the minister would still pursue his usual studied obscurity of policy. Points must be conceded to the Americans, before a complete agreement could be made with them, even on terms to be inserted in the universal peace, which would open the full cry of a powerful party upon him, among which were the refugees. It could not be supposed, that the refugees and Penobscot were such points with the nation or minister, that they would continue the war for them only, if they were ready to strike with France, Spain, and Holland.

The Count then asked me some questions respecting Sagadahoc, which I answered by showing him the records which I had in my pocket, particularly that of Governor Pownall's solemn

act of possession in 1759, the grants and settlements of Mount Desert, Machias, and all the other townships east of Penobscot River, the original grant of James I. to Sir William Alexander of Nova Scotia, in which it is bounded on St. Croix River (this grant I had in Latin, French, and English), the dissertations of Governor Shirley and Governor Hutchinson, and the authority of Governor Bernard, all showing the right of Massachusetts to this tract to be incontestable. I added, that I did not think any British minister would ever put his hand to a written claim of that tract of land, their own national acts were so numerous and so clear against them. The Count said, Mr. Fitzherbert had told him that it was for the masts that a point was made of that tract; but the Count said, Canada was an immense resource for masts. I said, there were so few masts there that this could not be the motive; that the refugees were still at the bottom of this; several of them had pretensions to lands in Sagadahoc, and the rest hoped for grants there.

The Count said, it was not at all surprising that the British ministry should insist upon compensation to the tories, for that all the precedents were in their favor; in the case of the United Provinces with Spain, all were restored to their possessions; and that there never had been an example of such an affair terminated by treaty, but all were restored. He said it was a point well settled by precedents. I begged his Excellency's pardon for this, and thought there was no precedent in point. A restitution of an estate not alienated, although confiscated to a crown or state, could not be a precedent in point, because, in our case, these estates had not only been confiscated, but alienated by the state, so that it was no longer in the power of the state to restore them. And when you come to the question of compensation, there is every argument of national honor, dignity of the state, public and private justice and humanity, for us to insist upon a compensation for all the plate, negroes, rice, and tobacco stolen, and houses and substance consumed, as there is for them to demand compensation to the tories; and this was so much the stronger in our favor, as our sufferers were innocent people, and theirs guilty ones.

M. Rayneval, who was present, said something about the King and nation being bound to support their adherents. I answered, that I could not comprehend this doctrine. Here was

a set of people whose bad faith and misrepresentations had deceived the King and deluded the nation to follow their all-devouring ambition, until they had totally failed of their object, had brought an indelible reproach on the British name, and almost irretrievable ruin on the nation, and yet that nation is bound to support their deceivers and ruiners! If the national honor was bound at all, it was bound still to follow their ambition, to conquer America, and plant the refugees there in pomp and power, and in such case, we all know whose estates would be confiscated, and what compensation would be obtained. All this M. Rayneval said was very true.

The Count asked me to dine, which I accepted, and was treated with more attention and complaisance than ever, both by him and the Countess.

As it is our duty to penetrate, if we can, the motives and views of our allies, as well as our enemies, it is worth while for congress to consider what may be the true motives of these intimations in favor of the tories. History shows that nations have generally had as much difficulty to arrange their affairs with their allies as with their enemies. France has had as much, this war, with Spain as with England. Holland and England, whenever they have been allies, have always found many difficulties, and from the nature of things it must ever be an intricate task to reconcile the notions, prejudices, principles, &c., of two nations in one concert of counsels and operations.

We may well think, that the French would be very glad to have the Americans join with them in a future war. Suppose, for example, they should think the tories men of monarchical principles, or men of more ambition than principle, or men corrupted and of no principle, and should, therefore, think them more easily seduced to their purposes than virtuous republicans, is it not easy to see the policy of a French minister in wishing them amnesty and compensation? Suppose that a French minister foresees that the presence of the tories in America will keep up perpetually two parties, a French and an English party, and that this will compel the patriotic and independent men to join the French side, is it not natural for him to wish them restored? Is it not easy too to see that a French minister cannot wish to have the English and Americans perfectly agreed upon all points, before they themselves, the Spanish, and the

Dutch, are agreed too? Can they be sorry then to see us split upon such a point as the tories? What can be their motives to become the advocates of the tories? It seems the French minister at Philadelphia has made some representations to congress in favor of a compensation to the royalists, and that the Count de Vergennes's conversation with me was much in favor of it. The Count probably knows, that we are instructed against it, and that congress are instructed against it, or rather have not a constitutional authority to make it; that we can only write about it to congress, and they to the States, who may, and probably will, deliberate upon it a year or eighteen months before they all decide, and then every one of them will determine against it. In this way there is an insuperable obstacle to any agreement between the English and Americans, even upon terms to be inserted in the general peace, before all are ready, and indeed after. It has been upon former occasions the constant practice of the French to have some of their subjects in London, and the English some of theirs in Paris, during conferences for peace, in order to propagate such sentiments as they wished to prevail. I doubt not such are there now. M. Rayneval has certainly been there. It is reported, I know not how truly, that M. Gerard has been there, and probably others are there, who can easily prompt the tories to clamor, and to cry that the King's dignity and the nation's honor are compromised to support their demands.

America has been long enough involved in the wars of Europe. She has been a football between contending nations from the beginning, and it is easy to foresee, that France and England both will endeavor to involve us in their future wars. It is our interest and duty to avoid them as much as possible, and to be completely independent, and to have nothing to do with either of them, but in commerce. My poor thoughts and feeble efforts have been from the beginning constantly employed to arrange all our European connections to this end, and will continue to be so employed, whether they succeed or not. My hopes of success are stronger now than they ever have been, because I find Mr. Jay precisely in the same sentiments, after all the observations and reflections he has made in Europe, and Dr. Franklin, at last, at least appears to coincide with us. We are all three perfectly united in the affair of the tories and of Sagadahoc,

the only points in which the British minister pretends to differ from us.

The inclosed papers will show congress the substance of the negotiation. The treaty, as first projected between Mr. Oswald on one side, and Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay on the other, before my arrival; the treaty as projected after my arrival, between Mr. Oswald and the three American ministers, my Lord Shelburne having disagreed to the first; Mr. Oswald's letter and our answer; Mr. Strachey's letter and our answer. Mr. Strachey has gone to London with the whole, and we are waiting his return, or the arrival of some other, with further instructions.

If congress should wish to know my conjecture, it is, that the ministry will still insist upon compensation to the tories, and thus involve the nation every month of the war in an expense sufficient to make a full compensation to all the tories in question. They would not do this, however, if they were ready with France and Spain.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

HENRY LAURENS TO JOHN ADAMS.

London, 12 November, 1782.

DEAR SIR, — An untoward circumstance had hurried me from Bath, where I had been about a month in the progress of health; I was waiting the determination of this Court, whether I might, upon terms consistent with my honor, return and continue in the same pursuit during the winter months, or be obliged at all hazards to withdraw immediately from the kingdom. In this dilemma, I had this afternoon the honor of receiving your letter of the 6th instant, accompanied by an act of congress of the 17th September.

My country enjoins, and condescends to desire; I must, therefore, also, at all hazards to myself, obey and comply. Diffident as I am of my own abilities, I shall as speedily as possible proceed and join my colleagues.

For the rest, the wound is deep, but I apply to myself the consolation which I administered to the father of the brave

[1] Compare with this, the Diary, vol. iii. pp. 300 – 306.

Colonel Parker: — "Thank God, I had a son who dared to die in defence of his country." My dear friend, adieu,

HENRY LAURENS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 18 November, 1782.

The instruction from congress, which directs us to pay so strict an attention to the French ministry, and to follow their advice, is conceived in terms so universal and unlimited, as to give a great deal of anxiety to my mind.

There is no man more impressed with the obligation of obedience to instructions; but, in ordinary cases, the principal is so near the deputy as to be able to attend to the whole progress of the business, and to be informed of every new fact and every sudden thought. Ambassadors in Europe can send expresses to their Courts, and give and receive intelligence in a few days with the utmost certainty. In such cases there is no room for mistake, misunderstanding, or surprise. But, in our case, it is very different. We are at an immense distance. Despatches are liable to foul play, and vessels are subject to accidents. New scenes open, the time presses, various nations are in suspense, and necessity forces us to act.

What can we do? If a French minister advises us to cede to the Spaniards the whole river of the Mississippi and five hundred miles of territory to the eastward of it, are we bound by our instruction to put our signature to the cession, when the English themselves are willing we should extend to the river, and enjoy our natural right to its navigation? If we should be counselled to relinquish our right to the fishery on the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, when the British ministry are ready by treaty to acknowledge our right to it, are we obliged to relinquish it? If we are advised to restore and compensate the tories, are we to comply? If we know, or have reason to believe, that things which will have weight upon the minds of the British ministry against us upon some points, will be communicated to them in some way or other, secret or open, if we communicate them to this Court, are we bound to do it?

I cannot think that a construction so literal and severe was ever intended to be put upon it; and, therefore, I see no way of

doing my duty to congress, but to interpret the instruction, as we do all general precepts and maxims, by such restrictions and limitations, as reason, necessity, and the nature of things demand.

It may sometimes be known to a deputy, that an instruction from his principal was given upon information of mistaken facts. What is he to do? When he knows, that if the truth had been known, his principal would have given a directly contrary order, is he to follow that which issued upon mistake? When he knows, or has only good reason to believe, that, if his principal were on the spot, and fully informed of the present state of facts, he would give contrary directions, is he bound by such as were given before? It cannot be denied that instructions are binding, that it is a duty to obey them, and that a departure from them cannot be justified; but I think it cannot be denied, on the other hand, that, in our peculiar situation, cases may happen, in which it might become our duty to depend upon being excused (or, if you will, pardoned) for presuming, that if congress were upon the spot, they would judge as we do.

I presume not to dictate, nor to advise, but I may venture to give my opinion, as I do freely, and with much real concern for the public, that it would be better, if every instruction in being were totally repealed, which enjoins upon any American minister to follow, or ask the advice, or even to communicate with any French or other minister or ambassador in the world. It is an inextricable embarrassment everywhere. Advice would not be more seldom asked, nor communication less frequent. It would be more freely given. A communication of information, or a request of counsel, would then be received as a compliment and a mark of respect; it is now considered as a duty and a right. Your ministers would have more weight, and be the more respected through the world. Congress cannot do too much to give weight to their own ministers, for, they may depend upon it, great and unjustifiable pains are taken to prevent them from acquiring reputation, and even to prevent an idea taking root in any part of Europe, that any thing has been or can be done by them. And there is nothing that humbles and depresses, nothing that shackles and confines, in short, nothing that renders totally useless all your ministers in Europe, so much as these positive instructions to consult and communi-

cate with French ministers upon all occasions, and to follow their advice. And I really think it would be better to constitute the Count de Vergennes our sole minister, and give him full powers to make peace and treat with all Europe, than to continue any of us in the service under the instructions in being, if they are to be understood in that unlimited sense which some persons contend for.

I hope that nothing indecent has escaped me upon this occasion. If any expressions appear too strong, the great importance of the subject, and the deep impression it has made on my mind and heart, must be my apology.

With great respect and esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

Paris, 19 November, 1782.

Gentlemen, — Your favor of 15th instant is this moment come to hand. M. le Couteulx and Mr. Grand called upon me last evening upon the same subject. I told them both what I now repeat to you: — "That I have no right, power, or authority, whatsoever, to give any orders, directions, or advice in this matter, Mr. Morris alone having the authority of congress to dispose of the money. But if my opinion as a man and a private citizen would give them any satisfaction, it was that M. le Couteulx should draw upon you at present only for one million of florins, and leave the rest, after Mr. Grand shall have drawn out the four hundred thousand livres for the interest of the money borrowed by the King of France in Holland, to pay the drafts of Mr. Morris as they may arrive, or to be paid hereafter to M. le Couteulx or Mr. Grand, according as necessities may appear.

There was no copy of Mr. Morris's letter inclosed in yours to me. I should be glad if Mr. Dumas would hasten in all the accounts of repairs to the house, and let them be paid off.

I know not when the obstructions to trade will all be removed by a peace. But if the nations of the armed neutrality should all follow the example of the King of Great Britain, in acknowledging our independence, and protect their own ships in going

and coming to and from our ports, I think the impediments to trade between Holland and America would be lessened.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 21 November, 1782.

SIR, — We live in critical moments. Parliament is to meet, and the King's speech will be delivered, on the 26th. If the speech announces Mr. Oswald's commission, and the two houses in their answers thank him for issuing it, and there should be no change in the ministry, the prospect of peace will be flattering. Or if there should be a change in the ministry, and the Duke of Portland, with Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, should come in, it will be still more so. But if Richmond, Camden, Keppel, and Townshend, should retire, and my Lord North and company come in, with or without the Earl of Shelburne, the appearances of peace will be very unpromising. My Lord North, indeed, cannot revoke the acknowledgment of our independence, and would not probably renounce the negotiations for peace, but ill-will to us is so habitual to him and his master, that he would fall in earnestly with the wing-clipping system ; join in attempts to deprive us of the fisheries and the Mississippi, and to fasten upon us the tories; and in every other measure to cramp, stint, impoverish, and enfeeble us. Shelburne is not so orthodox as he should be, but North is a much greater heretic in American politics.

It deserves much consideration what course we should take, in case the old ministry should come in, wholly, or in part. It is certain, at present, that to be obnoxious to the Americans and their ministers is a very formidable popular cry against any minister or candidate for the ministry in England, for the nation is more generally for recovering the good-will of the Americans than they ever have been. Nothing would strike such a blow to any ministry as to break off the negotiations for peace; if the old ministry come in, they will demand terms of us at first, probably, that we can never agree to.

It is now eleven or twelve days since the last result of our conferences was laid before the ministry in London. Mr. Vaughan went off on Sunday noon, the 17th. So that he is,

no doubt, before this time, with my Lord Shelburne. He is possessed of an ample budget of arguments to convince his Lordship that he ought to give up all the remaining points between us.[1] Mr. Oswald's letters will suggest the same arguments in a different light, and Mr. Strachey, if he is disposed to do it, is able to enlarge upon them all in conversation.

The fundamental point of the sovereignty of the United States being settled in England, the only question now is, whether they shall pursue a contracted or a liberal, a good-natured or an ill-natured plan towards us. If they are generous, and allow us all we ask, it will be the better for them; if stingy, the worse. That France does not wish them to be very noble to us may be true. But we should be dupes indeed, if we did not make use of every argument with them, to show them that it is their interest to be so. And they will be the greatest bubbles of all, if they should suffer themselves to be deceived by their passions or by any arts to adopt an opposite tenor of conduct.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Paris, 3 December, 1782.

Sir, — The moments we live in are critical, and may be improved perhaps to advantage; for which purpose I beg leave to propose to your consideration, whether it is not proper for us to write to Mr. Dana, at Petersburg, acquaint him with the signatures of the preliminaries, inclose to him an authentic copy of them, and advise him to communicate it to the ministers of the Empress and to all the ministers of the neutral powers at her Court, together with a copy of his commission to subscribe to the principles of the armed neutrality. The present seems to me the most proper time for this step.

The United States are as much interested in the marine treaty as any power; and, if we take this step, we may with propriety

[1] At a late period of his life, Mr. Vaughan deposited with the late John Quincy Adams, copies of his confidential letters addressed to Lord Shelburne during the period of this private mission. It was originally the intention to have added them in the form of an appendix to this volume, but the mass of valuable materials for the present work, has proved to be so large as to require serious reduction from the first plan.

propose, if not insist, upon an article in the definitive treaty, respecting this matter, which will be as agreeable to France and Spain as to the United Provinces.

I have heretofore mentioned to Mr. Jay a similar proposal; who approved, and I will propose it again to-day to him and Mr. Laurens. If you approve the measure, you will be so good as to order an authentic copy to be made of the preliminary treaty, that we may prepare a letter the first time we meet.

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 4 December, 1782.

Sir, — It is with much pleasure that I transmit you the preliminary treaty between the King of Great Britain and the United States of America. The Mississippi, the Western lands, Sagadahoc, and the fisheries are secured as well as we could, and I hope what is done for the refugees will be pardoned.[1]

As the objects for which I ever consented to leave my family and country are thus far accomplished, I now beg leave to resign all my employments in Europe. They are soon enumerated, — the first is the commission to borrow money in Holland; and the second is my credence to their High Mightinesses. These two should be filled up immediately; and as Mr. Laurens was originally designed to that country, and my mission there was merely owing to his misfortune, I hope that congress will send him a full power for that Court.

The commission for peace I hope will be fully executed before this reaches you. But, if it should not, as the terms are fixed, I should not choose to stay in Europe merely for the honor of affixing my signature to the definitive treaty, and I see no necessity of filling up my place; but if congress should think otherwise, I hope they will think Mr. Dana the best entitled to it. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

[1] Many details respecting Mr. Adams's part in this negotiation are found in the Diary, vol. iii. pp. 306 – 336.

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Paris, 6 December, 1783.

Dear Sir, — You may easily guess from your own feelings what mine may be in communicating to you the intelligence that the preliminary treaty, to be inserted in the definitive treaty, was signed the 30th November by the plenipotentiaries on each side. We have tolerable satisfaction in the Mississippi, the boundaries, and the fisheries, and I hope not much to regret with regard to the tories or any thing else.

Mr. F., Mr. J., and Mr. Laurens, as well as myself, are of opinion that this is the proper time for you to communicate to the ministry, where you are, your mission. But I believe we shall write you a joint letter upon this subject.

Meantime, I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

THE COMMISSIONERS TO FRANCIS DANA.

Paris, 12 December, 1782.

Sir, — We have the honor to congratulate you on the signature of the preliminary treaty of peace between his Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, to be inserted in the definitive treaty when France and Britain shall have agreed upon their terms. The articles, of which we do ourselves the honor to inclose you a copy, were completed on the 30th of last month.

To us, at this distance, the present opportunity appears to be the most favorable for you to communicate your mission to the ministers of the Empress of Russia, and to the ministers of all the other neutral powers residing at her Court; and, if you have no objections, we presume you will wish to be furnished with the inclosed paper to communicate at the same time.

We heartily wish you success, and, if you should inform us of a fair prospect of it, we shall propose an article in the definitive treaty, to secure the freedom of navigation according to the principles of the late marine treaty of the neutral powers.

We have the honor to be, &c. &c.

John Adams.
B. Franklin.
John Jay.

THE COMMISSIONERS TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.[1]

Paris, 14 December, 1782.

Sir, — We have the honor to congratulate congress on the signature of the preliminaries of a peace between the Crown of Great Britain and the United States of America, to be inserted in a definitive treaty so soon as the terms between the Crowns of France and Great Britain shall be agreed on. A copy of the articles is here inclosed, and we cannot but flatter ourselves that they will appear to congress, as they do to all of us, to be consistent with the honor and interest of the United States, and we are persuaded congress would be more fully of that opinion, if they were apprised of all the circumstances and reasons which have influenced the negotiation. Although it is impossible for us to go into that detail, we think it necessary, nevertheless, to make a few remarks on such of the articles as appear most to require elucidation.

Remarks on Article 2d, relative to Boundaries.

The Court of Great Britain insisted on retaining all the territories comprehended within the Province of Quebec, by the act of parliament respecting it. They contended that Nova Scotia should extend to the River Kennebec; and they claimed not only all the lands in the western country and on the Mississippi, which were not expressly included in our charters and governments, but also such lands within them as remained ungranted by the King of Great Britain. It would be endless to enumerate all the discussions and arguments on the subject.

We knew this Court and Spain to be against our claims to the western country, and having no reason to think that lines more favorable could ever have been obtained, we finally agreed to those described in this article; indeed, they appear to leave us little to complain of, and not much to desire. Congress will observe, that although our northern line is in a certain part below the latitude of forty-five, yet in others it extends above it, divides the Lake Superior, and gives us access to its western

[1] This joint letter of the commissioners is inserted in this work on the strength of the evidence furnished by the original draft, in the handwriting of Mr. Adams. The paragraph respecting the secret article is not, however, found there, and the next one touching their action towards the French Court is in the handwriting of Mr. Jay.

and southern waters, from which a line in that latitude would have excluded us.

Remarks on Article 4th, respecting Creditors.

We had been informed that some of the States had confiscated British debts; but although each State has a right to bind its own citizens, yet, in our opinion, it appertains solely to congress, in whom exclusively are vested the rights of making war and peace, to pass acts against the subjects of a power with which the confederacy may be at war. It therefore only remained for us to consider, whether this article is founded in justice and good policy.

In our opinion, no acts of government could dissolve the obligations of good faith resulting from lawful contracts between individuals of the two countries, prior to the war. We knew that some of the British creditors were making common cause with the refugees and other adversaries of our independence; besides, sacrificing private justice to reasons of state and political convenience, is always an odious measure; and the purity of our reputation in this respect, in all foreign commercial countries, is of infinitely more importance to us than all the sums in question. It may also be remarked, that American and British creditors are placed on an equal footing.

Remarks on Articles 5th and 6th, respecting Refugees.

These articles were among the first discussed and the last agreed to. And had not the conclusion of this business at the time of its date been particularly important to the British administration, the respect, which both in London and Versailles, is supposed to be due to the honor, dignity, and interest of royalty, would probably have forever prevented our bringing this article so near to the views of congress and the sovereign rights of the States as it now stands. When it is considered that it was utterly impossible to render this article perfectly consistent, both with American and British ideas of honor, we presume that the middle line adopted by this article, is as little unfavorable to the former as any that could in reason be expected.

As to the separate article, we beg leave to observe, that it was our policy to render the navigation of the River Mississippi so important to Britain as that their views might correspond with

ours on that subject. Their possessing the country on the river north of the line from the Lake of the Woods affords a foundation for their claiming such navigation. And as the importance of West Florida to Britain was for the same reason rather to be strengthened than otherwise, we thought it advisable to allow them the extent contained in the separate article, especially as before the war it had been annexed by Britain to West Florida, and would operate as an additional inducement to their joining with us in agreeing that the navigation of the river should forever remain open to both. The map used in the course of our negotiations was Mitchell's.

As we had reason to imagine that the articles respecting the boundaries, the refugees, and fisheries, did not correspond with the policy of this Court, we did not communicate the preliminaries to the minister until after they were signed; (and not even then the *separate article*). We hope that these considerations will excuse our having so far deviated from the spirit of our instructions. The Count de Vergennes, on perusing the articles appeared surprised, (but not displeased),[1] at their being so favorable to us.

We beg leave to add our advice, that copies be sent us of the accounts directed to be taken by the different States, of the unnecessary devastations and sufferings sustained by them from the enemy in the course of the war. Should they arrive before the signature of the definitive treaty, they might possibly answer very good purposes.

With great respect, we have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servants,

John Adams.
B. Franklin.
John Jay.
Henry Laurens.

J. G. HOLTZHEY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 23 Decembre, 1782.

Monsieur, — Je me trouve honoré de la vôtre du 2e du passé; sensible aux louanges que vous me faites de mon travail, ils

[1] The words inclosed in parentheses are not in Mr. Jay's draft of this paragraph.

m'ont engagé d'en faire une autre médaille, que je prends la liberté de vous envoyer ci-jointe, dans la ferme attente qu'elle ne vous fera pas moins de satisfaction que la précédente. Au reste, monsieur, comme né dans cette ville, dans laquelle demeurent tant de braves gens qui ont vivement desiré l'union de vos États avec les nôtres, j'ai été inspiré à la faire connoître par la postérité.[1]

Au reste, monsieur, je récommande les médailles à votre bonté pour l'Amérique quand l'occasion se présentera, et je suis, &c. &c. JEAN GEORGE HOLTZHEY.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 26 Decembre, 1782.

MONSIEUR, — Nos amis vous prient d'appuyer de tous vos bons offices possibles la négociation de messieurs les plénipotentiaires de cette république, surtout quant aux dédommagemens qu'ils demandent, ainsi que pour la liberté parfaite et illimitée de leur navigation; afin que ces messieurs aient lieu de faire mention dans leurs dépêches ici de ces bons offices, et que nos amis puissent s'en prévaloir non seulement pour confondre les Anglomanes, mais pour exalter à leurs peuples respectifs les effets de l'amitié fraternelle des Américains pour cette nation. Un petit mot de réponse là-dessus que je puisse leur répéter de la part de votre excellence, leur fera grand plaisir. En attendant je suis chargé de vous présenter leurs respects.

M. Holtzhey m'a envoyé une seconde médaille pour vous, charmante. Je vous l'enverrai, monsieur, par première occasion. En attendant, voici sa lettre et description. L'emblème du coq m'a rappelé un trait, si je ne me trompe, des mémoires de Vargas. L'ambassadeur de France au concile de Trente parlant d'une manière qui déplaisait au ministre du pape, celui-ci l'interrompit en criant, *Gallus cantat.* L'ambassadeur, sans se déconcerter, répliqua, *Utinam Petrus fleret.* Je suis, &c.

DUMAS.

[1] This relates to the medal commemorative of the signature of the treaty between the United States and Holland, an engraving of which accompanies this volume.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 1 January, 1783.

Dear Sir, — Returning this evening from Versailles, where I had been to make the compliments of the season, I found your favors of the 26th and 27th of December. The letters inclosed shall be forwarded, as you desire.

The Dutch ministers here have no occasion for my assistance. *Non tali auxilio, &c.* I have the honor to be more particularly acquainted with M. Brantzen, who is certainly a very able man, and universally acknowledged to be so by all who know him. The arguments, which I know he has used with the British minister, are such as can never be answered, both upon the liberty of navigation, and the compensation for damages. He is an entire master of his subject, and has urged it with a degree of perspicuity and eloquence, that I know has much struck his antagonists.

Unnecessary, however, as any exertions of mine have been, I have not omitted any opportunity of throwing in any friendly suggestions in my power, where there was a possibility of doing any good to our good friends, the Dutch. I have made such suggestions to Mr. Fitzherbert. But with Mr. Oswald I have had several very serious conversations upon the subject. So I have also with Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Whitefoord. To Mr. Oswald I urged the necessity of Great Britain's agreeing with the Dutch upon the unlimited freedom of navigation, from a variety of topics, some of which I may explain to you more particularly hereafter. Thus much I may say at present, that I told him it was impossible for Great Britain to avoid it; it would probably be insisted upon by all the other powers. France and Spain, as well as Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, the Emperor, and Portugal, as well as Holland, had already signed the armed neutrality. The United States of America had declared themselves ready to sign, and were ready. The combination being thus powerful, Great Britain could not resist it. But if she should refuse to agree to it with Holland, and the other powers should acquiesce, and Holland should make peace without it (which would never, however, be the case), yet all would be ineffectual, for Holland would forever be able to

make use of other neutral bottoms, and would thus enjoy the benefit of this liberty in reality, though denied it by treaty, and in appearance. It would, therefore, be more for the honor and interest of Great Britain to agree to it with a good grace, in the treaty with Holland. Nay, the wisest part she could act would be to set on foot a negotiation immediately for signing herself the treaty of armed neutrality, and then admitting it into the treaty with Holland would be a thing of course. At one of these conversations Dr. Franklin was present, who supported me with all his weight; at another, Mr. Jay seconded me with all his abilities and ingenuity. Mr. Oswald has several times assured me that he had written these arguments and his own opinion in conformity with them, to the King's ministers in London, and I doubt not they will be adopted.

With respect to the compensation for damages, it is impossible to add any thing to the arguments M. Brantzen has urged to show the justice of it; and if Britain is really wise, she will think it her policy to do every thing in her power to soften the resentment of the Dutch, and regain their good will and good humor.

The rage of Great Britain, however, has carried her to such extravagant lengths, in a cause unjust from beginning to end, that she is scarcely able to repair the injuries she has done. America has a just claim to compensation for all her burnt towns and plundered property, and, indeed, for all her slaughtered sons, if that were possible. I shall continue to embrace every opportunity that presents, of doing all the little service in my power to our good friends the Dutch, whose friendship for us I shall not soon forget. This must be communicated with great discretion, if at all. My best respects to all, &c.

John Adams.

TO J. G. HOLTZHEY.

Paris, 2 January, 1783.

Sir, — I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 23d December, together with the explication of your new medal, in commemoration of the signature of the treaty of commerce, which is equally ingenious with that which celebrates the acknowledgment of American independ-

ence. These events are worthy of your ingenuity, sir, and deserve to be remembered by posterity, not only for the blessings which will be derived to the two nations, but by the influence they have had in accelerating the disposition of Great Britain for a general peace. For whether such a peace shall take place this year or not, there is great reason to believe it will happen some years the sooner for those events which you are laboring to immortalize.

Please to accept of my thanks for this fresh instance of your obliging attention to me, and believe me to be,

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 14 Janvier, 1783.

Monsieur, — L'incluse pour Philadelphie vous mettra au fait du courant ici. L'honorée vôtre du 1er Janvier est pour moi une vraie et précieuse étrenne de nouvel an. J'ai fait confidence verbale du contenu à Messieurs de Gyselaer, Van Berckel, et Visscher sous le sceau du secret, et à personne autre. Ils en ont été charmés. Du reste, ils étoient bien sûrs d'avance de vos bonnes dispositions, et de celles de messieurs vos collégues, pour cette république. Ce qui leur tient à cœur, c'est que, comme M. Brantzen écrit constamment dans ses dépêches ici, de la part de M. le Comte de Vergennes, le soin qu'il a des intérêts de la république, vous l'autorisassiez de même ministériellement à apprendre à L. H. P. que vous les avez également à cœur. Ces messieurs ici s'appliquent à cet égard le vers de l'école.

"Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter."

En un mot, ils souhaiteroient que les dites dépêches rendissent ici la justice qui est due à chacun.

M. de Gysclaer a écrit à M. Brantzen pour qu'il pressât de sa part M. le Baron de Linden (ci-devant envoyé de la république en Suede) de revenir au plutôt de Paris où il est depuis quelques mois. Mais il n'a pas fait ouverture à M. Brantzen de son plan, parcequ'il ne voudroit pas que celui-ci en communiquât quelque chose prématurément à quelque relation en ce pays. M. G. vous prie donc, monsieur, d'avoir un entretien avec M. de

Linden, et de lui confier de sa part, sous le secret, que son plan est de faire en sorte que M. de Linden soit nommé ministre de cette république auprès des États Unis ; et que, pour cet effet, il faut qu'il revienne incessamment ici, pour battre ensemble le fer pendant qu'il est chaud. M. Van Berckel de son côté n'a rien contre ce plan.

La poste, qui va partir, ne me laisse que le moment de finir, avec mon respectueux attachement, &c.

Dumas.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 19 January, 1783.

Sir, — I have yet to acknowledge the receipt of your favors of the 26th, 27th, 30th, and 31st of December, and 2d of January. Your despatches are sent along as you desire. I hope you are quite recovered from your indisposition.

I can give you no information concerning peace. It is given out that the point will be decided here to-day or to-morrow. Others say that the Duke de la Vauguyon is to make the peace at the Hague.

Inclosed is a copy of our preliminaries, but I must entreat you not to permit them to be published or copied without further information from me. You may communicate them in confidence to our friends, but it is thought best to let the British ministry lay them first before parliament and take their own time for it.

The great points of independence, the fisheries, the Mississippi, and the boundaries, are settled to our satisfaction. But in point of compensation for damages, we must put our hands in our own pockets. With great regard, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 22 January, 1783.

Sir, — Upon a sudden notification from the Count de Vergennes, Dr. Franklin and myself, in the absence of Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, went to Versailles, and arrived at the Count's office at ten o'clock on Monday, the 20th of this month. At

eleven, arrived the Count d'Aranda and Mr. Fitzherbert. The ministers of the three crowns signed and sealed the preliminaries of peace and an armistice, in presence of Doctor Franklin and myself, who also signed and sealed a declaration of an armistice between the Crown of Great Britain and the United States of America, and received a counter declaration from Mr. Fitzherbert. Copies of these declarations are inclosed.

The King of Great Britain has made a declaration concerning the terms that he will allow to the Dutch; but they are not such as will give satisfaction to that unfortunate nation, for whom, on account of their friendship for us, and the important benefits we have received from it, I feel very sensibly and sincerely. Yesterday we went to Versailles again to make our court to the King and royal family upon the occasion, and received the compliments of the foreign ministers.

The Count d'Aranda invited me to dine with him on Sunday next, and said he hoped that the affairs of Spain and the United States would be soon adjusted *à l'amiable*. I answered, that I wished it with all my heart. The two Floridas and Minorca are more than a *quantum meruit* for what this power has done, and the Dutch unfortunately are to suffer for it. It is not in my power to say when the definitive treaty will be signed. I hope not before the Dutch are ready; in six weeks or two months at farthest I suppose.

It is no longer necessary for congress to appoint another person in my place in the commission for peace, because it will be executed before this reaches America. But I beg leave to renew the resignation of the credence to the states-general and the commission for borrowing money in Holland, and to request that no time may be lost in transmitting the acceptance of this resignation and another person to take that station, that I may be able to go home in the Spring ships.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 23 January, 1783.

Sir, — The letters you did me the honor to write on the 6th and 18th of November came safe to hand.

You do me honor, sir, in applauding the judgment I have formed from time to time of the Court of Britain, and future ages will give me credit for the judgment I have formed of some other courts. The true designs of a minister of state are not difficult to be penetrated by an honest man of common sense, who is in a situation to know any thing of the secret of affairs, and to observe constantly the chain of public events; for whatever ostensible appearances may be put on, whatever obliquities may be imagined, however the web may be woven, or the thread doubled and twisted, enough will be seen to unravel the whole.

My opinions, as you observe, sometimes run counter to those generally received; but the reason of this has generally been, that I have had earlier evidence than the generality, and I have had the satisfaction to find that others have formed the same judgment when they have had the same intelligence. I do not affect singularity, nor love to be in a minority, though truth and justice have sometimes obliged me to be so. You say, that nothing can be more conformable to your wishes than the instructions I transmitted. I am not surprised at this; it is very natural. Had I never been on this side of the Atlantic, I believe I should have been of your mind in this particular. At present I cannot be, and I believe, by this time, the Dutch regret having given them. You will hear enough of the reason of it. I have lived long enough, and had experience enough of the conduct of governments and people, nations and courts, to be convinced that gratitude, friendship, unsuspecting confidence, and all the most amiable passions in human nature, are the most dangerous guides in politics. I assure you, sir, if we had not been more cautious than the Dutch, we should have been worse off than they, and our country would have suffered much more.

Mr. Laurens has been here, and has behaved with great caution, firmness, and wisdom. He arrived so late as only to attend the two last days of the conferences, the 29th and 30th of November. But the short time he was with us, he was of great service to the cause. He has done great service to America in England, where his conversation has been such as the purest and firmest American could wish it, and has made many converts. He is gone again to Bath, and his journey will do as much good to his country as to his health. He will return to the signature of the definitive treaty.

The ratifications of my contracts have been received.

The release of Captain Asgill was so exquisite a relief to my feelings, that I have not much cared what interposition it was owing to. It would have been a horrid damp to the joys of peace, if we had received a disagreeable account of him.

The difference between Denmark and Holland is of no serious nature. The clue to the whole is, the Queen dowager is sister to the Duke of Brunswick; but there is nothing to fear from Denmark. As to the northern powers, we have nothing to fear from any of them. All of them and all the neutral powers would have acknowledged our independence before now, by receiving Mr. Dana to sign the principles of the armed neutrality, if he had not been restrained from acting. The unlimited confidence of congress has been grossly abused, and we should have been irreparably injured, if we had not been upon our guard. As our liberties and most important interests are now secured as far as they can be against Great Britain, it would be my wish to say as little as possible of the policy of any minister of our first ally, which has not been as we could desire, and to retain forever a grateful remembrance of the friendly assistance we have received. But we have evidence enough to warn us against unlimited confidence in any European minister of state.

I have never drawn upon Dr. Franklin for any money since the end of my two and a half years' salary; and he tells me he has made no use of the bills. I had received money for my subsistence of Messieurs Willink, and as it will be but a few months more, at farthest, that I shall have to subsist in Europe, I beg leave to proceed to the end in the same way. I shall receive only the amount of my salary, and settle the account with congress on my return.

I hope to be safely landed on my native shore in the month of June; and to this end, I beg that an appointment may be made to the Dutch mission, and the acceptance of my resignation be transmitted to me by the first ships.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 24 Janvier, 1783.

Monsieur, — La manière subite et imprévue dont on a reçu ici la nouvelle de la signature des préliminaires par toutes les autres puissances belligérantes, sans que celui qui tient le plus à cœur ici ait été fixé, a d'abord consterné nos amis; mais après être revenu de leur première surprise, M. Van Berckel, à la réquisition et sur les instances de M. le grand pensionnaire, dans une conférence secrète, a proposé un moyen, sans doute le plus noble et le plus solide, pour parvenir au but désiré et désirable à tous. M. le grand pensionnaire l'a saisi avec empressement; et l'on est convenu, que M. Van Berckel me prieroit de leur part, de consulter votre excellence en toute diligence sur ce moyen, que voici.

"Pour accélérer la négociation de la paix générale, et pour prévenir les discussions ultérieures entre L. H. P. et la Grande Bretagne sur le point de la navigation libre et illimitée, on demande à M. Adams, *s'il se trouve assez autorisé de la part du congrès, pour accéder au traité de la neutralité armée déjà conclu entre quelques puissances belligérantes de l'Europe, ou pour entrer dans une pareille négociation avec l'Espagne, la France, et les Pays-Bas Unis.*

Dans l'un et l'autre cas, L. H. Puissances pourroient faire la même proposition à la France et à l'Espagne, afin de prévenir les discussions sur le point de la liberté des mers, qui pourroient arrêter la paix générale; et pour mettre la république en état de faire sa paix avec la Grande Bretagne, qui pourroit être retardée par des difficultés que pourroient rencontrer des stipulations particulières, ou des arrangemens à faire avec l'Angleterre sur ce point.

Le traité définitif entre l'Angleterre et la république pourroit alors se faire *sous la réserve* du droit primitif de toutes les nations, qui se trouvent dans l'exercice de ce droit, à moins qu'ils ne s'en soient départis par des traités particuliers au sujet de contrebandes reconnues pour telles par les contractans respectifs.

M. Adams est prié instamment de communiquer ses idées sur ce point le plutôt possible, et d'y ajouter ses réflexions sur les moyens d'avancer une telle négociation et d'acheminer la paix

générale. Car il paroît qu'en attendant la république pourroit accéder à l'armistice qui devra résulter de la signature des préliminaires de paix entre les autres puissances belligérantes, et traiter avec l'Angleterre sur tous les autres points en question."

Vous êtes le maître, monsieur, si vous le jugez à propos, de conférer aussi là-dessus ministériellement avec M. Brantzen.

Il ne me reste plus, que de vous présenter les complimens et tout ce qui se peut penser de plus cordial de la part de M. Van Berckel, qui vient de me quitter, pour me laisser écrire tout ce que dessus. Je suis, &c.

DUMAS.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 29 January, 1783.

SIR, — Upon receiving the letter, which you did me the honor to write me on the 24th, late last evening, I went immediately to consult with my colleague, Mr. Jay, and we agreed to go this morning to Dr. Franklin. Accordingly to-day we went together to Passy, and communicated your letter to him, and after recollecting the powers we have received, we all agreed that I should make you the following answer.

You will readily recollect the resolutions of congress, which I did myself the honor two years ago to communicate to the President of their High Mightinesses, and to the ministers of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, at the Hague. The letter to the President was sent "*au greffe*," and there may, perhaps, be now found. These resolutions contained the approbation of congress, of the principles of the declaration of the Empress of Russia, and authorized any of the American ministers in Europe, if invited thereto, to pledge the faith of the United States to the observance of them.

Some time after this, congress sent Mr. Dana a commission with full power to accede to the principles of the marine treaty between the neutral powers, and he is now at Petersburg, vested with these powers, and, according to late intelligence received from him, has well-founded expectations of being soon admitted.

It is the opinion of my colleagues, as well as my own, that no commission of mine to their High Mightinesses contains author-

ity to negotiate this business; and we are all of opinion, that it is most proper that Mr. Dana should negotiate it.

But as there has been no express revocation of the power given to all or any of us, by the first resolutions, and if the case should happen, that Mr. Dana could not attend in season, on account of the distance, for the sake of accelerating the signature of the definitive treaty of peace, we should not hesitate to pledge the faith of the United States to the observance of the principles of the armed neutrality. I wish it were in my power to give you a more satisfactory answer, but candor will warrant no other.

With great respect to the gentlemen, as well as to you,

I have the honor to be, sir, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 30 Janvier, 1783.

MONSIEUR, — Les lettres que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire Vendredi 24e et Mardi 28e ne sont que l'expression fidèle des sentimens de nos républicains. Je n'y ai rien mis du mien; au contraire, j'ai adouci tant que j'ai pu. Si l'on ne trouve à raccommoder la chose de la manière que je l'ai proposée, c'en est fait pour toujours du crédit ici de la France. Voici la copie promise de la lettre; et d'une autre de la même main reçue ce matin. La France et nos républicains, depuis tous ces jours, sont l'objet des sarcasmes et des railleries amères des malintentionnés; et nos républicains, sans avoir perdu courage vis-à-vis de leurs antagonistes internes, sont outrés, et n'ont plus aucune confiance en ce qui leur est dit ministériellement de la part de la France, pour colorer ce qui vient de se passer, ou pour leur faire faire quelque démarche ultérieure. Ils plaignent personnellement M. le Duc de la Vauguyon, et disent que M. le Comte de Vergennes le sacrifie, et lui fait perdre d'un coup de plume tout le fruit de ses sages, infatigables et brillans travaux ici. Du reste ils déclarent qu'ils ne veulent être dominés ou influés, ou menés à la lisière, ni par l'Angleterre ni par la France; et que quoiqu'on leur propose de la part de la France, ils ne le porteront plus devant leurs villes que moyennant des sûretés suffisantes en poche.

Si vous pouvez faire réussir, monsieur, ce que j'ai proposé, je crois que ce sera une opération politique importante, un coup de partie pour l'honneur et l'avantage des États Unis, parce-qu'elle établira leur crédit, leur dignité et leur gloire ici pour toujours. Votre jugement profond et profonde pénétration, monsieur, n'a pas besoin que j'entre dans de plus longs raisonnemens là-dessus. Il suffit que cette affaire sera également avantageuse à tous, puisque tous y participeront et se l'assûreront.

M. le Comte de Llano m'a fait prier ce matin, de lui communiquer les préliminaires dont M. l'ambassadeur lui a dit que j'avois copie. Mais il s'est contenté de mes raisons pour ne pouvoir lui donner qu'une idée verbale des dits préliminaires. J'ai cru pouvoir et devoir faire le même plaisir à M. d'Asp.

Vous connoissez toute la vérité, &c.

Dumas.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 4 Fevrier, 1783.

Monsieur, — L'honorée vôtre du 29e a pleinement satisfait ces Messieurs; et M. Van Berckel, au nom de tous, m'a chargé de vous en remercier, et de vous assurer que c'est précisément ce qu'il leur falloit, ce qu'ils espéroient pouvoir se faire de votre part et de celle de messieurs vos collègues, et que vous pouvez compter sur eux, comme ils comptent sur vous, en allant agir conséquemment. J'ai été la communiquer aussi à M. le grand pensionnaire, qui m'a paru penser comme eux, et que l'on m'a dit confidemment, de plus d'une bonne part, avoir à désirer, autant que la France, que le parti Anglais ne prédomine plus ici.

J'ai à vous présenter les respects de tous. Je suis charmé, monsieur, qu'il y ait eu moyen de les contenter à si bon marché; car il me paroît que ce qu'ils demandent n'est autre chose que ce qui est stipulé dans les traités de l'Amérique, tant avec cette république qu'avec la France. Du reste ils sont déterminés à ne signer que lorsque cet article de la navigation sera en règle de la manière proposée, et à ne point perdre non plus Négapatnam; et l'on craint que si M. le Comte de Vergennes ne trouve pas quelque remède à cela, la confiance et l'inclination de cette

nation pour la France ne soit étouffée dans sa renaissance; elle importoit cependant plus à la France que Tabago.

M. de Vergennes, pour s'excuser de la précipitation avec laquelle on a signé, a dit aux ministres de la république à Paris, entre autres, que d'un côté l'Amérique, qui se disoit epuisée, craignoit un soulèvement, si l'on devoit imposer de nouvelles taxes, demandoit par M. Franklin vingt millions pour la campagne prochaine si elle avoit lieu, enfin, qui vouloit jouir de la paix et de son traité plutôt que de hazarder une prolongation de guerre qui pouvoit altérer l'accomplissement; et de l'autre, l'Espagne, qui, également epuisée, réclamoit absolument cette conclusion, — avoient mis la France dans la nécessité de signer si précipitamment; mais que cela n'empêchoit pas l'intention ferme de sa Majesté de ne point terminer sans que L. H. P. soient comprises dans la paix générale, et contentes. Dieu le veuille!

Il paroît que M. l'ambassadeur et M. le grand pensionnaire ont reçu, chacun par son courier, les mêmes assurances. Ce dernier cependant n'a pas encore dit le même de sa dépêche à nos autres amis.

Je suis persuadé que dans les lettres confidentielles que je vous ai écrites, monsieur, depuis l'officielle du 24e, vous avez gardé par devers vous seul ce qui (contre mon intention, qui est pure) pourroit faire de la peine à d'autres, et me nuire, quoiqu'à tort, dans leur esprit. J'ai voulu et dû être avec vous un historien fidèle.

Daignez faire agréer mes respects à Messrs. Franklin et Jay, et être assuré du bon aloi de celui, &c.

Dumas.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 5 February, 1783.

Sir, — The resolution of congress of the 12th of July, 1781, "That the commission and instructions, for negotiating a treaty of commerce between these United States and Great Britain, given to the Honorable John Adams, on the 29th day of September, 1779, be, and they are hereby revoked," was duly received by me in Holland; but no explanation of the motives to it, or the reasons on which it was founded, was ever transmitted to

me by congress, or the committee of foreign affairs, or any individual member; nor has anybody in Europe or America ever once attempted, that I know of, to guess at the reason. Whether it was intended as a punishment to me, or with a charitable design not to lead me into temptation; whether it was intended as a punishment to the English for their insolence and barbarity; whether it was intended to prevent or remove suspicions of allies, or the envy and green-eyed jealousy of copatriots, I know not. Of one thing, however, I am fully satisfied, that congress had reasons, and meant well; but whether those reasons were founded on true or mistaken information, I know not.

When I recollect the instructions, which were given and revoked with that commission, I can guess, and only guess, at some considerations, which might, or might not, operate with congress. In these instructions, congress determined,

1st. That the common right of fishing should in no case be given up.

2dly. That it is essential to the welfare of all these United States, that the inhabitants thereof, at the expiration of the war, should continue to enjoy the free and undisturbed exercise of their common right to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, and the other fishing banks and seas of North America, preserving inviolate the treaties between France and the said States, &c.

3dly. " That our faith be pledged to the several States, that without their unanimous consent no treaty of commerce shall be entered into, nor any trade or commerce whatever carried on with Great Britain, without the explicit stipulation hereinafter mentioned. You are, therefore, not to consent to any treaty of commerce with Great Britain, without an explicit stipulation on her part, not to molest or disturb the inhabitants of the United States of America, in taking fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, and other fisheries in the American seas, anywhere excepting within the distance of three leagues of the shores of the territories remaining to Great Britain at the close of the war, if a nearer distance cannot be obtained by negotiation. And in the negotiation you are to exert your most strenuous endeavors to obtain a nearer distance in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and particularly along the shores of Nova Scotia; as to which latter we are desirous, that even the shores may be occasionally used

for the purpose of carrying on the fisheries by the inhabitants of these States."

These instructions are very decisive in favor of our indubitable right to the fisheries; and it is possible, that congress might be of opinion, that commerce would be the strongest inducement to the English to make peace, and at the same time, that there was something so naval in the fisheries, that the dread of acknowledging our right to them would be the strongest obstacle in the way of peace. They might think, too, that peace was of more importance to the United States, than a British acknowledgment of our right to the fisheries, which, to be sure, would have been enjoyed by our people in a good degree without it.

Reasonings like these might influence congress to revoke the commission and instructions in question. But whatever probability there might appear in them at that time, experience has since shown, that they were not well founded. On the contrary, arguments have been found to convince the British ministers themselves, that it was the interest of their King and country, not only to acknowledge the American right to the fisheries, but to encourage the unrestrained exercise of it. These considerations, therefore, can be no longer of any weight against a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, or against accrediting a minister to the Court of St. James. Nor can I conceive of any motive now existing against these measures. On the contrary, so many advantages present themselves to view, that I think it my duty to recommend them to congress as proper to be adopted without loss of time. If there are in congress any of those gentlemen, with whom I had the honor to serve in the years 1775 and 1776, they may possibly remember, that in arguing in favor of sending ministers to Versailles, to propose a connection with that Court, I laid it down as a first principle, that we should calculate all our measures and foreign negotiations in such a manner, as to avoid a too great dependence upon any one power of Europe — to avoid all obligations and temptations to take any part in future European wars; that the business of America with Europe was commerce, not politics or war; and, above all, that it never could be our interest to ruin Great Britain, or injure or weaken her any further than should be necessary to support our independence, and our alliances, and that, as soon as Great Britain should be brought to a temper to acknowledge

our sovereignty and our alliances, and consent that we should maintain the one, and fulfil the others, it would be our interest and duty to be her friends, as well as the friends of all the other powers of Europe, and enemies to none.

We are now happily arrived, through many tremendous tempests, at that period. Great Britain respects us as sovereign States, and respects all our political engagements with foreign nations; and as long as she continues in this temper of wisdom, it is our duty to respect her. We have accordingly made a treaty with her and mutually sworn to be friends. Through the whole period of our warfare and negotiations, I confess I have never lost sight of the principles and the system, with which I set out, which appeared to me to be the sentiments of congress with great unanimity; and I have no reason to believe that any change of opinion has taken place; if there has not, every one will agree with me, that no measure we can pursue will have such a tendency to preserve the government and people of England in the right system for their own and our interest, and the interest of our allies too, well understood, as sending a minister to reside at the Court of London.

In the next place, the Court of London is the best station to collect intelligence from every part, and by means of the freedom of the press to communicate information for the benefit of our country, to every part of the world. In time of peace, there is so frequent travelling between Paris, London, and the Hague, that the correspondence of our ministers at those Courts may be carried on by private hands, without hazarding any thing from the infidelity of the posts, and congress may reasonably expect advantages from this circumstance.

In the third place, a treaty of commerce with Great Britain is an affair of great importance to both countries. Upon this occasion I hope I shall be excused if I venture to advise, that congress should instruct their minister not to conclude such a treaty, without sending the project to them for their observations and fresh instructions; and I think it would not be improper, on this occasion, to imitate the Dutch method, take the project *ad referendum*, and transmit it to the legislatures of all the States for their remarks, before congress finally resolve. Their minister may be authorized and instructed, in the mean time, to enter into a temporary convention for regulating the present trade for

a limited number of months or years, or until the treaty of commerce shall be completed.

In the fourth place, it is our part to be the first to send a minister to Great Britain, which is the older, and as yet the superior state. It becomes us to send a minister first, and I doubt not the King of Great Britain will very soon return the compliment. Whereas if we do not begin, I believe there will be many delicacies at St. James's about being the first to send. I confess I wish a British minister at Philadelphia, and think we should derive many benefits from his residence there. While we have any foreign ministers among us, I wish to have them from all the great powers with whom we are much connected. The *Corps Diplomatique* at every Court is, or ought to be, a system representing at least that part of the system of Europe, with which that Court is most conversant.

In the same manner, or at least for similar reasons, as long as we have any one minister abroad at any European Court, I think we ought to have one at every one to which we are most essentially related, whether in commerce or policy; and, therefore, while we have any minister at Versailles, the Hague, or London, I think it clear we ought to have one at each, though I confess I have sometimes thought that, after a very few years, it will be the best thing we can do to recall every minister from Europe, and send embassies only on special occasions.

If, however, any members of congress should have any delicacies, lest an American minister should not be received with a dignity becoming his rank and character at London, they may send a commission to make a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, to their minister at Madrid, or Versailles, or the Hague, or St. Petersburg, and instruct him to carry on the negotiation from the Court where he may be, until he shall be invited to London, or a letter of credence may be sent to one of these, with instructions to go to London, as soon as the King shall appoint a minister to go to Philadelphia.

After all, however, my opinion is, that none of these manœuvres are necessary, but that the best way will be to send a minister directly to St. James's, with a letter of credence to the King, as a minister plenipotentiary, and a commission to treat of a treaty of commerce, but with instructions not to come to any irrevocable conclusion, until congress and all the States have an

opportunity to consider of the project, and suggest their amendments.

There is one more argument in favor of sending a minister forthwith; it is this. While this mission lies open, it will be a source of jealousy among present ministers, and such as are or may be candidates to be foreign ministers, a source of intrigue and faction among their partisans and adherents, and a source of animosity and division among the people of the States. For this reason, it is a pity, that the first choice had not been such as congress could have continued to approve, and the first measure such as congress could have constantly persevered in. If this had been the case, the door of faction would have been kept shut. As this, however, was once my department, by the voice of eleven States in twelve present, and as I will be answerable, at any hazard, it will never be the department of any one by a greater majority, there seems to be a propriety in my giving my advice concerning it, on taking leave of it, if such is the will of congress, as I have before done in this letter, according to the best of my judgment. And if it should not be thought too presumptuous, I would beg leave to add, what is my idea of the qualifications necessary for an American foreign minister in general, and particularly and above all to the Court of St. James.

In the first place, he should have had an education in classical learning, and in the knowledge of general history, ancient and modern, and particularly the history of France, England, Holland, and America. He should be well versed in the principles of ethics, of the law of nature and nations, of legislation and government, of the civil Roman law, of the laws of England and the United States, of the public law of Europe, and in the letters, memoirs, and histories of those great men, who have heretofore shone in the diplomatic order, and conducted the affairs of nations, and the world. He should be of an age to possess a maturity of judgment, arising from experience in business. He should be active, attentive, and industrious; and above all, he should possess an upright heart and an independent spirit, and should be one who decidedly makes the interest of his country, not the policy of any other nation, nor his own private ambition or interest, or those of his family, friends, and connections, the rule of his conduct.

We hear so much said about a genteel address and a facility in speaking the French language, that one would think a dancing master and a French master the only tutors necessary to educate a statesman. Be it remembered, the present revolution, neither in America nor Europe, has been accomplished by elegant bows, nor by fluency in French, nor will any great thing ever be effected by such accomplishments alone. A man must have something in his head to say, before he can speak to effect, how ready soever he may be at utterance. And if the knowledge is in his head, and the virtues are in his heart, he will never fail to find a way of communicating his sentiments to good purpose. He will always have excellent translators ready, if he wants them, to turn his thoughts into any language he desires.

As to what is called a fine address, it is seldom attended to after a first or second conversation; and even in these, it is regarded no more by men of sense of any country than another thing which I once heard disputed with great vivacity among the officers of the French frigate, the Sensible. The question was, what were the several departments of an ambassador and a secretary of legation. After a long and shrewd discussion, it was decided by a majority of votes, "that the secretary's part was to do the business, and that of the ambassador to keep a mistress." This decision produced a laugh among the company, and no ideas of the kind will ever produce any thing else among men of understanding.

It is very true, that it is possible, that a case may happen, that a man may serve his country by a bribe well placed, or an intrigue of pleasure with a woman. But it is equally true, that a man's country will be sold and betrayed a thousand times by this infamous commerce, where it will be once served. It is very certain that we shall never be a match for European statesmen in such accomplishments for negotiation, any more than, I must and will add, they will equal us in any solid abilities, virtues, and application to business, if we choose wisely among the excellent characters with which our country abounds.

Among the ministers who have already crossed the Atlantic to Europe, there have been none exceeding Mr. Jay and Mr. Dana in all the qualifications I have presumed to enumerate; and, I must say, that if I had the honor to give my vote in congress for a minister at the Court of Great Britain, provided that

injustice must be finally done to him, who was the first object of his country's choice, such have been the activity, intelligence, address, and fortitude of Mr. Jay, as well as his sufferings in his voyage, journeys, and past services, that I should think of no other object of my choice than that gentleman. If congress should neglect all their old ministers, and send a fresh one from America, they cannot be at a loss, for there are in that country great numbers of men well qualified for the service. These are most certainly better known by name to congress than to me; and, therefore, I shall venture no further, but conclude, by wishing this arduous business well settled, and by assurances to congress and to you, sir, of my warmest attachment and respect.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 5 February, 1783.

SIR, — I received last night your favor of 30th of January, with the copies of letters inclosed. I am not at all surprised at the sentiments expressed in those copies, nor am I able to give any satisfactory answer to the pungent questions which I read there. I feel very sincerely afflicted for our friends, without being now able, and without having ever been able, to do them any service. I could tell you a very true story, which would convince you that the United States run a great risk of as bad a peace as that of Holland, and that there is no thanks to the minister that your correspondent thinks hard of, that we had not a worse. Unsuspecting confidence is ever dangerous in negotiations. The states-general should have had a minister in London as soon as M. Rayneval went there, and instead of being instructed to trust so much to another, they should have been instructed to conduct their affairs wholly themselves. You know the situation I am in, and therefore I rely upon your honor to communicate nothing of this to the Duke de la Vauguyon. You know I never liked the French minister of foreign affairs. I had great reasons to distrust him which you know not, but the world may one day see.

As to the proposed negotiation for the freedom of navigation, Mr. Dana has full power to treat. And if France and Spain

will come into a treaty with Holland upon the subject, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, and myself will treat whilst waiting for Mr. Dana. But, between you and me, I doubt whether the French minister will be for such a treaty. This is merely from conjecture, not knowledge, so that no dependence can be placed upon it. If the English are cunning, they will make a merit with Holland of agreeing to the liberty of navigation; and I suspect this is their intention, if they get Negapatnam. With great esteem,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Paris, 14 February, 1783.

SIR, — We have expected you here every day for a long time, and begin to be apprehensive you do not design to return, which will be a disappointment to me, because I wish to have the pleasure of finishing the work of peace with a gentleman who has conducted it hitherto with so much advantage. If this satisfaction is not to be obtained, I wish the service in the hands of some one equally possessed of the only system which can ever conduct it to a right conclusion for the prosperity of your country or mine. Of one thing I am well persuaded, — that no man will ever be found with better qualifications or dispositions.

If you should not return here, it is not very probable we shall meet again. But whether together or asunder, I shall carry with me at all times the most entire esteem and respect for Mr. Oswald. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 15 Février, 1783.

MONSIEUR, — Ce que vous me dites, dans la vôtre du 5, ou plutôt ce que vous ne m'y dites pas, me fait désirer avec impatience votre retour ici, c'est à dire, la conclusion finale du traité définitif de paix générale; car je ne vois pas d'apparence à avoir cette satisfaction plutôt.

Il me tarde extrêmement d'apprendre ce qu'il peut y avoir de

pire que le tour joué à nos amis. Il regne un froid à glacer, pas entre eux et moi (au contraire), mais entre eux et certain caractère dont ils plaignent pourtant la personne; et s'il en faut croire ce qu'on se dit ici à l'oreille, il est à plaindre, après toutes les peines qu'il s'est données pour bien servir, et tout le succès qu'ont eu ses peines.

Nous sommes fort curieux ici de savoir le rôle et les allures à Paris et à Versailles de M. de H., le chambellan du Prince.

Je suis, &c.

DUMAS.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 18 Février, 1783.

MONSIEUR, — Nos amis sont très contents de la déclaration réitérée que je leur ai faite de votre part, &c., et vont agir en conséquence auprès de la cour de France, compris celle d'Espagne, et auprès de vos excellences. Ils me paroissent persuadés que la mesure peut et doit réussir. Cependant, à tout événement, ils me chargent de proposer encore la question suivante, pour obtenir là-dessus une réponse, favorable s'il se peut, qui achèveroit de les mettre à l'aise, et de les tranquilliser.

" Q. Lorsque L. H. P. auront fait la proposition à la France, de signer conjointement avec l'Espagne, l'Amérique et les Pays-Bas Unis une convention fondée sur les principes de la neutralité armée pour le maintien de la liberté de la navigation; au cas que la France et l'Espagne parussent vouloir reculer et différer une telle convention, ou s'y refuser avant la conclusion ou signature du traité définitif; M. Dana, et pendant son absence M. Adams, soit seul et comme ministre des États Unis auprès de cette république, ou avec messieurs ses collègues, seroient ils prêts à signer une telle convention provisionelle, lorsqu'elle leur seroit proposée de la part de L. H. P., entre les États Unis et les Pays-Bas Unis?

" On est persuadé ici, que sans un traité pareil, soit entre la France, l'Espagne, les États Unis et les Pays-Bas Unis, ou, à défaut des deux premières, au moins entre les deux dernières puissances, rien ne sauroit prévenir ni excuser la honte du traité définitif pour cette république, qui n'est entrée en guerre que

pour la liberté des mers, et qui en a fait une *conditio sine quâ non* dans ses préliminaires de paix."

Il est fort à souhaiter que l'un de ces deux arrangemens soit faisable à défaut de l'autre, parceque cela applaniroit tout d'un coup le chemin au traité définitif. Il ne resteroit du moins d'autre difficulté que celle de Négapatnam et de la navigation par les Moluques, sur lesquelles je viens de lire le rapport des 17 directeurs de la compagnie, qui opposent les raisons les plus fortes à la cession de l'un et de l'autre.

Mon opinion est, sauf toujours votre meilleur avis, que votre acquiescement à la demande de ces messieurs peut se fonder sur ces trois choses. 1o. Sur la résolution des États Unis du 5 Octobre, 1780, communiquée par vous-même à L. H. P. par lettre du 8 Mars, 1781 ; et sur ce que vous m'avez marqué, que vos pouvoirs à cet égard n'ont point été révoqués. 2o. Sur ce que L. H. P. sont une des parties de la neutralité armée, à laquelle Mr. Dana attend qu'il plaise à une autre des parties d'admettre les États Unis. 3o. Sur ce qu'il ne s'agit, ce me semble, que de se garantir réciproquement ce que vous avez déjà signé dans le traité d'amitié et de commerce conclu avec L. H. P.

Je suis, &c. DUMAS.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 23 February, 1783.

SIR, — In answer to the questions in yours of the 18th, I beg leave to inform you, that, in my opinion, Mr. Dana is the only proper person in Europe to treat with anybody in Europe, about the armed neutrality and the liberty of navigation. It is true our former power is not expressly revoked, but I consider Mr. Dana's commissions in form to be an implicit and tacit revocation of ours ; so that I dare not take upon me, and, from friendship and delicacy to Mr. Dana, I ought not, to enter into any conferences upon this subject alone. In company with my colleagues in the commission for peace, I would not refuse to enter into conferences, waiting Mr. Dana. But whether my colleagues would enter into this negotiation without France and Spain, at least France, I doubt ; and have not time now to consult them, who are at a distance from me.

I think the proper method for our friends to take, is to open a negotiation with Mr. Dana and with all the neutral powers, and with France and Spain at the same time. We, who are now in and about Paris, might negotiate with the ministers of France, Spain, and Holland, or at least confer, if they will admit us, waiting Mr. Dana. Mr. D. can enter into negotiation with Holland and all the other powers who have signed the armed neutrality. Believe me, your friend,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE TRUSTEES OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE.

Paris, 25 February, 1783.

GENTLEMEN, — Your favor of 24th September recommending your worthy president, Dr. Wheelock, and his designs, gave me much pleasure and does me great honor.

It is to American seminaries of learning that America is indebted for her glory and prosperity, and, therefore, no man can be more usefully employed than in affording them every countenance and assistance in his power.

Dr. Wheelock, after remaining a few days in Paris, set off with his brother for the Hague and Amsterdam. I gave him letters to several persons of consideration in those cities, such as will be most likely to forward his designs, but what success he will have, I am not able to say.

With the greatest respect,

JOHN ADAMS.

B. VAUGHAN TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Extract.*)

London, 25 February, 1783.

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Laurens, whom you inquire after, I presume is just arrived in London; and Mr. Oswald *was* about to return to Paris; but what this distracted state of parties will produce, I cannot yet inform you. The event of the peace, and the reception it meets in parliament, will tell you who were America's best friends. They were those who made least profession and had most understanding. It is unnecessary to hint more to you. All ranks are satisfied with peace, but the *great* are not

satisfied with a minister who had so few of *them* in his train. They therefore say we might have had a better peace. You are one of those that know, and I ask your opinion about the fact of a better peace being easy, without more war, or even with it.

I mean to put you up some pamphlets of the worst sort; for our better are only preparing. Hereafter, the peace will probably be well understood, and then you shall have other pamphlets in another style. I have the honor to be, &c.

Benjamin Vaughan.

P. J. VAN BERCKEL TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 5 Mars, 1783.

Monsieur, — Puisque j'ai la satisfaction d'être élu par leurs hautes puissances pour aller résider auprès du congrès des États Unis de l'Amérique en qualité de ministre plenipotentiaire de notre république, je n'ai pu me dispenser de vous en informer. Mais encore je me fais cette occasion de vous écrire à profit, et je la saisis pour vous témoigner que l'honneur de cette commission me flatte extrêmement, parceque j'ai toujours senti le désir le plus vif d'en être chargé, afin de trouver les moyens de mettre au jour les sentimens d'estime et d'amour que mon cœur nourrit pour cette nouvelle république; ce que je ferai d'autant plus facilement parce que le service de ma patrie exige que je porte tous mes soins à serrer le plus étroitement ces noeuds, qui doivent lier ces deux soeurs de façon qu'elles ne se séparent jamais.

Permettez moi en même temps de solliciter votre amitié et votre bienveillance. Elles me sont chères, et me peuvent être de très grande utilité. J'en conçois tout le prix, et je ne manquerai pas de faire tout le possible pour vous engager à les accorder à celui qui se nomme avec la plus parfaite estime, monsieur, &c.

P. J. Van Berckel.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Extract.*)

La Haie, 6 Mars, 1783.

Monsieur, — Vous devez avoir reçu actuellement, messieurs, ainsi que les ministres de France et d'Espagne, par ceux de la république à Paris, l'ouverture d'entamer la négociation pour un

traité de garantie réciproque de la liberté des mers. Ces messieurs comptent à cet égard, et *principalement*, sur les promesses réitérées que vous m'avez autorisé de leur faire, sûrs que vous ne vous laisserez point influer ni diriger par *Shelburne & Co.*; qui s'entendent, disent ils, *comme larrons en foire*. Vous n'aurez pas de peine à comprendre l'allusion. Si cette convention pouvoit se faire avant la signature du traité définitif, ce seroit le triomphe ici de nos républicains. Quelqu'un m'ayant objecté que l'Angleterre pourroit en prendre ombrage si ce traité se faisoit avant l'autre; *et depuis quand*, ai-je répliqué, *la France a-t-elle recommencée à avoir peur de donner ombrage à l'Angleterre?*

Je suis, &c. DUMAS.

TO P. J. VAN BERCKEL.

Paris, 11 March, 1783.

SIR, — I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 5th of this month, and am happy to receive this confirmation of the news of your appointment as minister plenipotentiary to the United States of America. Your name, connections, and character are sufficient pledges of your attachment to your own country as well as ours, and cannot fail to be as pleasing in America as they seem to be in Europe. A friendship between our countries is so natural, that I think you will have little difficulty in succeeding to your wishes.

M. Dumas desires me to inform you what furniture it will be proper to carry with you. In my opinion, you will be able to purchase at Philadelphia whatever you may have occasion for, as cheap and as good as you can have them in Europe. Linens and other light articles you may carry with you, but it is unnecessary to incumber yourself with heavy ones.

It will by no means be necessary to make a public entry. There has as yet been no example of it, and as such splendid ceremonies are much out of fashion in Europe, it will never be necessary to introduce them into America. You will have no occasion therefore for any carriage but one of a common kind, which may be made in Philadelphia or Boston with as much elegance and convenience as in Paris, Amsterdam, or London.

My advice would be to land at Boston, and take the journey

to Philadelphia, while you send your frigate round by sea to that city. This will give you an opportunity of seeing a great part of the United States, and of becoming acquainted with many principal characters. I will be answerable for your cordial reception everywhere.

His Excellency, the Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Hancock, and his Honor, the President of the Senate, Mr. Samuel Adams, will receive you at Boston. Governor Trumbull, at Connecticut; General Washington and Governor Clinton, at New York; Governor Livingston, at New Jersey. I would, by all means, advise you to pass through New York and New Jersey, where you will find multitudes charmed at the sight of a Dutch minister more than any other in the world.

I wish you a pleasant voyage and journey. If you take your departure at any time before the middle of June, your voyage can scarcely fail to be agreeable. After that, it may be long and tedious. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

B. VAUGHAN TO JOHN ADAMS.

London, 11 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR, — I do not learn that we have yet fixed our ministry, which does not at all concern me, provided we could fix our principles. I am happy, however, to find, notwithstanding the factions in parliament, that the people of England are not at all averse to a proper footing with America, provided they could be assured of America's disposition to be reciprocal in the matter of advance. So far they are right, that no *public* overtures from thence have yet arrived at their knowledge; in which I think you gentlemen at Paris might nevertheless assist us. Perhaps I may truly affirm that the boldness of my friend has done more towards advancing manly opinions than any thing I have yet experienced in this country. Happy I am to find, notwithstanding this clamor, that he retains all his old American sentiments, and repents of *nothing*. Some of his friends only lament that he did not corrupt the votes of some who never vote but by corruption; and in truth it would have secured the business.

I have the honor to be, &c.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Paris, 12 March, 1783.

Dear Sir, — I thank you for the pamphlets, which are an amusement in this place, how little soever there is in them of sense or candor. The refugees, however, seem to judge right in their own affair, — sensible that they have no claim at all upon America for compensation, they demand it of Great Britain, upon whom the pretensions of some of them may be very just. But why has no man dared to mention tens of thousands of sufferers in America, as innocent, as meritorious at least, as any of the refugees? Who is to make restitution and compensation to these?

Those who say you might have had a better peace, speak from conjecture, not from knowledge. They reason from a false comparison of the forces of the belligerent powers. Their imaginations magnify the finances and military power of Great Britain, and diminish those of France, Spain, Holland, and America, and then they reason from this delusive comparison, that the peace is inadequate to the relative situations. I am afraid that the vote to this purpose will be an unhappy one for Great Britain. Will it not nourish a continual discontent in your nation, and a continual jealousy in all the powers that have been at war with you?

I will answer you with great sincerity. I do not believe you could possibly have obtained a better treaty with America. On the contrary, the least delay would have lost you some advantages which you now have. What conditions might have been obtained from France and Spain, I know not. France appears in the treaty with great moderation in the eyes of Europe, and her aversion to continue the war could arise from no other motive. Spain appears to have conquered her predilection for Gibraltar. If, therefore, instead of wasting the force of forty or fifty ships to guard that rock, she had acted with France in the West Indies, or against New York, or both, with twenty-five, twenty, or even only fifteen Dutch ships in the North Seas or the channel, where would have been your hopes? Surely only in the defensive. Admitting what is very extravagantly improbable, that you could have defended all another year at an expense

of twenty millions, would you have been then able to demand better terms, or your adversaries disposed to grant them? I trow not. On the contrary, their courage and pretensions would have advanced.

America did you a very kind turn, you may depend upon it, when she rapidly hastened on the signature of the provisional treaty. Think of it as you will, you would have had no peace at this hour, but for this able seizure of the moment of the tide in the affairs of men, for which you are indebted to Mr. Oswald and his principals. Without this, the negotiations would have dreamed on until D'Estaing had sailed from Cadiz, and then, *Voilà une autre campagne!*

I should be very glad to see the better sort of pamphlets you mention, and particularly some to show the policy and the necessity of an immediate evacuation of New York and Penobscot. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Paris, 12 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR, — Appearances on the side where you are do not please me more than you; but I hope the weather will clear up, and that we shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you and Mr. Oswald here to put the last hand to the peace.

It is not worth while for any noble lord to "boast of his art" in obtaining the provisional treaty, without the knowledge of our great and good ally. It was not owing to "his art." But how does he know what knowledge was communicated to our ally? As to getting "John Adams & Co. hanged," this would be no more than a Hillsborough, Germaine, or Sandwich would have done, if they could. This would be no feat for a whig minister to boast of.[1]

[1] This alludes to the following passage in a letter of Mr. Laurens: —

"Mr. S. will communicate as much of the state of public affairs in this country as probably I know. My knowledge extends not much beyond appearances. These do not please me; but I am told that I shall be better pleased in a few days. Meantime, a certain noble lord, now a little beclouded, has not failed to take the necessary advantage of his success in obtaining the 'provisional treaty' without 'the knowledge or the participation of the great and good ally of America.' For argument's sake, I admit the fact. What then? John Adams &

This same "hanging" is, however, a grave business, and perhaps the aforesaid company may have reflected upon the nature of it more seriously than his Lordship, unless it has struck him lately. But I cannot think our country will hang her ministers merely for their simplicity in being cheated into independence, the fisheries, and half the great lakes. Our countrymen love buckskins, beaver-skins, tom-cod, and pine trees too well, to hang their ministers for accepting them, or even for purchasing them by a little too much "reciprocity" to the tories.

Be it as it may, if a French minister and an English minister should form a coalition as curious as that of the fox and the geese, to get J. A. hanged, he is pretty well prepared for this, or to be recalled, or censured, or flattered, or slandered, just as they please.

I wish I could see more serious preparations for evacuating New York and Penobscot. Our people will not feel like freemen in friendship with Great Britain, till this is done. If any one thinks that keeping possession of New York will help the refugees, he deceives himself. Great Britain's misfortunes have arisen from the ignorance in her rulers of the American character. If ministers are incapable of learning it, they never will succeed in addressing themselves to it. If they think that fear will work for the refugees, they will find it operate against them.

But why is the definitive treaty delayed? Congress will not take the preliminaries into consideration, till they have the definitive treaty. There can be no ratification, until congress have that; and, in my opinion, the States, after the ratification and recommendations, will take none of them into consideration, until the United States are evacuated by the troops. In this I may be mistaken.

My respects to your good family, and believe me, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

Co. may be hanged, but no damage will arise to the United States. I shall endeavor honestly to defeat his Lordship's pious designs. I suspected his Lordship's goodness, when he offered to make me a present of myself."

FRANCIS DANA TO JOHN ADAMS.

St. Petersburg, 16 March, 1783.

Sir, — Yours of the 22d of February has come to hand this moment, and has given me much satisfaction. I always admired the noble and independent spirit of my friend, but I now see cause to admire it still more. You have conferred additional obligations upon, or to express myself otherwise, you have rendered additional services to your country, by breaking to pieces chains forged to hold it in a state of subserviency to the interests of others. God and your country will approve the measure. But there is nothing gives me more real pleasure than your determination to return to America. I have only one request to make to you, — that you will not decline a moment taking a seat in congress after your arrival there. They want only proper information to lead them into proper measures. The turn of thinking there must be changed, and I know no man better calculated on every account to bring this about than yourself. I beseech you, therefore, never to decline such an occasion. By my last letter, you will find my intention is, if not to accompany you, at least to follow you soon to America.

As to your advice to me, to communicate my mission to the minister of the Emperor and the ministers of all the other Courts which have acceded to the armed neutrality, I think at present it is not advisable to make this communication on that occasion; for, first, I have no authority to make any *commercial* treaty with the Emperor; and as to that part of my commission which respects the armed neutrality or neutral confederation, I have long since, upon consideration, given it to congress as my opinion, that America could not become a party in it or accede formally to the marine convention so long as she continued a belligerent power; and also, that that convention, from its terms and nature, was limited to the duration of the war. But, if I should be mistaken in this last point, I think it is not worth while for America *at this time* to pay near five thousand pounds sterling to the ministers of this Court for the liberty of acceding to the marine convention; and, if it were, I have not the money at my disposal. The communication, you are sensible, must be general to all the parties to that confederation, and of course to

this Court. To make the communication, which would amount to a proposition on my part to accede to the convention, and not to be able to do it for want of what I know is essential to the end, would be only to expose the honor of the United States without the prospect of any advantage. It is quite enough to pay five thousand pounds sterling for a treaty of commerce with this empire. I think it my duty, therefore, to keep the marine convention out of sight as long as possible, and to confine myself to the treaty of commerce, into which I have adopted the leading principles of the marine convention, and shall endeavor to conclude both points in one treaty. If I fail in this, I must fail in both, and shall immediately quit this Court. I must exercise my discretion in some things, and, as you have done, submit my conduct to the judgment of those whose right it is to decide upon it. If they furnish me not with the means, they must not expect the accomplishment of my mission. I pray you to give me your advice upon these matters with the utmost freedom, and as soon as possible. Though I have ventured not to follow it in this particular case, yet I give you my reasons for not doing it, that you might judge upon them, and I am not the less obliged to you for your advice.

I have not received an answer in form to my letter communicating my mission to the vice-chancellor, but only a verbal message in excuse of the delay for a time entirely past. I do not like this delay. The *immediate* assurances mentioned in my letter in which I informed you of this communication, came from a member of her Majesty's private cabinet, who sought an interview with me for that occasion. But I refer you to a passage in my last letter, — "I am sick, &c." — God send me speedily a happy deliverance from them.

Adieu, my dear sir, yours,

Francis Dana.

HENRY LAURENS TO JOHN ADAMS.

London, 26 March, 1783.

Dear Sir, — I was yesterday honored by the receipt of your letter of the 12th inst.

That the "noble lord" did boast is beyond all doubt; but I

had the good fortune to give a check to his success, by propounding a question almost in terms with that which you have put. How does his Lordship know whether we conferred with, or what we communicated to, our ally? but, admitting the fact, which I do not admit, what then? Be assured that a disappointed and mortified Shelburne, maugre all pretensions to whiggism, has as good a stomach for such a "feat" as even a Hillsborough, a Germaine, or the other secretary, Sandwich had.

I coincide exactly in your opinion on the delay of the definitive treaty, the evacuation of New York, the tories, recommendations, &c.; and it is probable I have given a damp to the third edition "for the provisional establishment and regulation of trade, &c." by framing a counter-bill supposed to be pending in each of the United States, for regulating the British trade, which I held up as a mirror to a noble lord and a few of the most eminent commoners. The picture alarmed them, and, if I judge right, a lead will be laid upon their bill.

"You cannot think our country will hang their ministers for being cheated into independence, fisheries, &c., &c." I fancy not; but, be as grave as you please upon the subject, believe me, his Lordship boasted of having "cheated" us into those great benefits, and flattered himself with hopes that, upon the same ground, he would be able to "cheat" us out of them again. I hope his wings will be clipt. If the proper ministry should succeed, I have every reason to expect an honest and liberal proceeding with respect to us will immediately ensue. My opinion is founded upon the most explicit assurances from the very best hands. The tories, nicknamed loyalists, are execrated by the circle in which I sometimes move, and yet they say they must "make some provision for some of the poor devils for national honor's sake." I reply, make what provision you will, it would be impertinent in me to interfere in that business; but you must not attempt to cram them down our throats. It is time you should know that America will not be taxed without her own consent. I have uniformly discouraged all attempts to trade with the United States, until the definitive treaty shall be concluded, and the British forces by land and sea effectually withdrawn. The reasonings which I have urged, particularly personating the State of New York, have been acknowledged invincible; but some of the merchants are nevertheless mad,

and will send their ships. Let them be mad. I trust the United States will be wise. I am, dear sir, &c.

HENRY LAURENS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 14 April, 1783.

SIR, — You may easily imagine our anxiety to hear from America, when you know that we have no news to this hour, either of your reception of the news of peace, or of that of the treaty with Holland, four copies of which I put on board different vessels at Amsterdam, in October.

We have been in equal uncertainty about the turn which affairs might take in England. But by letters from Mr. Laurens we expect him every day, and Mr. David Hartley with him, in order to complete the definitive treaty. It would have been more agreeable to have finished with Mr. Oswald. But the present ministry are so dissatisfied with what is past, as they say, though nobody believes them, that they choose to change hands.

It will be proposed, I believe, to make a temporary arrangement of commercial matters, as our powers are not competent to a durable one, if to any. Congress will, no doubt, soon send a minister with full powers, as the treaty of commerce with Great Britain is of great importance, and our affairs in that country require an overseer.

It is confidently asserted, in letters from Holland, that M. Markow, the minister plenipotentiary from the Empress of Russia, has received from his mistress a full power to come to Paris, to the assistance of the Prince Bariatinski, at a congress for a general pacification. There is, as yet, no answer received from the Emperor. If the two Imperial Courts accept of the mediation, there will be a congress; but I suppose it will relate chiefly to the affairs of Holland, which are not yet arranged, and to the liberty of neutral navigation, which is their principal point. I wish success to that republic in this negotiation, which will help to compose their interior disorders, which are alarming. I know not whether it will be insisted or expected that we should join in the congress, nor do I know what we have to do in it, unless it be to settle that point as far as it relates to

us. There is nothing in difference between us and Great Britain which we cannot adjust ourselves without any mediation.

A spring passage to America is so great an object, that I should be very sorry to have the negotiations spun out to such a length as to oblige me to lose it; and I take it for granted, I shall now receive the acceptance of my resignation by the first ships. I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 16 April, 1783.

Sir, — In answer to the inquiry of M. Fagel, you will please to inform him that the letters of credence of M. Van Berckel should be addressed, — "To the United States of America in Congress assembled." "Friends and Allies."

The King of France, indeed, has added the word "great." "Great friends and allies." But I think it would be much better to leave out the word *great* and all other epithets. Congress have never assumed any other style; and I hope they never will assume or receive any other.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

THE SOCIETY OF LEEUWARDEN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Leeuwarde, 29 Avril, 1783.

Monsieur, — Nous avons enfin la satisfaction de voir achevée la médaille que nous avions projeté et dédié aux nobles et puissants seigneurs, les États de Frise. Votre Excellence est instruite du but et du contenu de cette médaille par notre requête du 8 Mai de l'année dernière, dont votre Excellence a eu la bonté d'insérer la traduction dans le recueil de pièces concernant l'Amérique Septentrionale, que votre Excellence a publié.[1]

Nous prions respectueusement votre Excellence de nous permettre de lui présenter deux de ces médailles, l'une pour servir au cas que votre Excellence pût trouver bon de la présenter au congrès des treize États Unis de l'Amérique.

[1] No trace of this medal remains among the effects of Mr. Adams.

Nous sommes en attendant charmés de voir, que les États des autres provinces, et consequemment la république entière, ont, à l'exemple des États de Frise, reconnu la liberté et l'indépendance de l'Amérique ; reconnoissance, qui, jointe aux bons offices que votre Excellence a employé, a déjà eu cette heureuse suite, qu'il a été conclu entre les deux états un traité d'amitié et de commerce, et qu'on a établi par là même, une base de bien-être et de prospérité réciproques. Nous avons l'honneur de féliciter votre Excellence de cet événement, et de souhaiter du fond de nos cœurs, que les travaux importants de votre Excellence dans les conférences actuelles pour la paix, puissent avoir une issue non moins heureuse ; afin que la grande et courageuse nation qui honore votre Excellence de sa confiance, puisse obtenir dans peu pour prix de sa valeur et de sa constance une paix glorieuse et durable, et qu'elle croisse ensuite tellement en gloire et en puissance, qu'elle puisse être l'effroi des usurpateurs et des tyrans, et un refuge toujours assuré aux opprimés. Veuille le Dieu tout puissant répandre sa bénédiction sur ces souhaits et sur ces prières !

Nous prenons la liberté de nous recommander à la bienveillance de votre Excellence, et d'être avec le plus profond respect, monsieur, &c.

Les Membres de la Société Bourgeoise
établie à Leeuwarde sous la devise, "*Par liberté et par zèle.*"

Et pour tous,
W. Wopkens.
V. Cats.

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Paris, 1 May, 1783.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 16th of March, and in answer to it, I do assure you that I do not intend to decline taking a seat in congress, if any State in the confederation should think it worth while to offer me one. I am grown very ambitious of being a limb of that sovereign. I had rather be master than servant, on the same principle that men swear at Highgate, — never to kiss the maid when they can kiss the mis-

tress. I should be very happy to sit alongside of you upon one of those seats, and rise up now and then, and tell stories of our peregrinations, and of the robbers we have met with in the highway. But you must not quit, till you have made your treaty.

I beg you would consider what I write to you as hints, not as advice. The reasons that you give, for not taking some I gave you, are very conclusive, and had not occurred to me. The first vessel will, I hope, bring you elucidations upon those points.

Mr. Hartley is to finish with us, and we are making preparations; but cannot say how much time will be necessary. They talk of a congress and mediation, and Mr. Markow is coming; but there is no need of either on our affairs. Yet we may be invited to join it; and who would not be ambitious of sitting in such a council of the celestials? Or rather, who would not be curious "to know by what sort of men this world is governed." With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO M. DUMAS.

Paris, 1 May, 1783.

Sir, — In answer to yours of the 25th ultimo, I can only say that I have no information of the United States having acceded to the armed neutrality. On the contrary, I have reasons to doubt it.

Is it not astonishing that we have no news from America? I cannot say when I shall be able to see you, because I know not when the definitive treaty will be signed. If we should have a congress to attend, it is impossible to foresee how long we shall be detained; for the delicacies, etiquette, and ceremonies of so many diplomatic sages, will not glide away with such rapidity as the provisional treaty with Mr. Oswald did. When men meet upon business, forenoon, afternoon, and evening, every day, they do a great deal, and do it well. But when they meet only two hours in a morning, once a week, they forget what was done at one meeting before another occurs.

I find that making treaties is very easy work when one has full powers, not too much shackled with instructions, and when there is but one minister on each side. If I were a king, which

I would not be for a world, or a congress, a member of which I hope to be, I would not send more than one minister upon any one piece of service, nor confine him by any instructions which should not be absolutely necessary.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY ESTABLISHED AT LEEUWARDEN, UNDER THE DEVICE, "BY LIBERTY AND ZEAL."

Paris, 10 May, 1783.

GENTLEMEN, — I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 29th day of last month, and the friendly sentiments it contains towards the United States of America deserve my warmest acknowledgments.

The resolutions of the States of Friesland, taken in the assemblies of February and April, 1782, do honor to that Province. The acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the United States of America, and the refusal of a separate peace by their High Mightinesses, the states-general, was one of those critical decisions which sometimes turn the tide of the affairs of men, and produce the unravelling of great scenes among nations. It seemed to open the eyes of the British nation, and to determine the fluctuating opinions of the whole world, and, consequently, contributed very much to accelerate the peace.

The medals you did me the honor to present me with this letter, are struck in great perfection, and express with a beautiful simplicity the two great events they were intended to commemorate. You will please to accept of my thanks for them. The first favorable opportunity shall be taken to present one of them to congress, as you desire.

Your republic, I am persuaded, will have no cause to repent of the part she has taken in favor of America; and may the friendship, correspondence, and alliance between the two nations be perpetual.

Permit me to add my best wishes for the prosperity of your society, and the felicity of your persons and families.

With great esteem and respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 21 May, 1783.

Sir, — I am just now honored with yours of the 19th of January, by the way of London. We have not yet had the happiness to receive, as we should be disposed to do with open arms, our excellent old friend Jefferson, and begin to fear that the news of peace has determined him not to come.

I thank you, sir, for your polite congratulations; when the tide turned, it flowed with rapidity, and carried the vessel, as I hope, into a safe harbor.

As to the loan in Holland, I have never troubled you nor any one else in America with details of the vexations of various kinds which I met with in the negotiation of it; indeed, I never thought it prudent or safe to do it. If I had told the whole truth, it could have done no good, and it might have done infinite mischief. In general, it is now sufficient to say, that private interest, party spirit, factions, cabals, and slanders have obstructed, perplexed, and tortured our loan in Holland, as well as all our other affairs, foreign and domestic. But as there has been a greater variety of clashing interests, — English, French, Stadtholderian, Republican, and American, — mixing in the affair of our loan in Holland, it has been more puzzled than any thing else. If, in the bitterness of my soul, I had described the fermentation, and mentioned names, and drawn characters, I might have transmitted a curious tale; but it would have only served to inflame old animosities and excite new ones.

A great many things are said to me, on purpose that they may be represented to you or to congress. Some of these I believe to be false, more of them I suspect, and some that are true would do no good. I think it necessary, therefore, to employ a little discretion in such cases.

Messrs. Willink & Co. will write you from time to time, as they tell me they have done, the state of the loan. Mr. Grand wants all the money, but they wait your orders. The loan has been and will be damped by transmitting the money to France; but your necessities were so urgent, that you could not avoid it.

In my opinion, if you had a minister at St. James's, and he were authorized to borrow money generally, in England or else-

where, it would serve you greatly, by causing an emulation even in Holland, besides the money you would procure in London, which would not be a trifling sum.

I wish I were in congress, that I might assist you in persuading our countrymen to pay taxes and build ships.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 24 May, 1783.

SIR, — I have the honor to inclose copies, to be laid before congress, of several papers. 1st. Mr. Hartley's full powers of May 14th. 2dly. The order of the King of Great Britain in council, for regulating the American trade, of May 14th. 3dly. Articles proposed by the American ministers to Mr. Hartley, April 29th. 4thly. Mr. Hartley's observations left with us May 21st. And 5thly. Mr. Hartley's proposition of the same day. This proposition, however, upon inquiry, we find Mr. Hartley does not incline to subscribe to, before he sends it to his Court for their orders; so that we have not yet given him our opinion of it. He has sent a courier to London, before whose return we hope to have further intelligence from Philadelphia.

The present British ministry discover an indecision and timidity which indicate instability. Some persons from England imagine that my Lord Shelburne will come in again. The change would produce a longer delay, but I think would be no disadvantage to America. If he had continued in power, I think we should have finished, or been ready to finish, before now, with Mr. Oswald. Mr. Hartley's dispositions, however, are very good, and, if left to his own judgment, would be liberal and fair.

The idea of reviving the trade, upon the plan of the laws of Great Britain before the war, although those laws were calculated so much for the advantage of that country, and so little for the advantage of ours, might be admissible for a few months, until ministers could be appointed on both sides to frame a treaty of commerce; provided no advantage should be ceded by it, in the negotiation of such treaty, and provided that such a

temporary convention for trade should neither delay nor influence the definitive treaty. It is much to be wished that the definitive treaty of peace and a permanent treaty of commerce could be signed at the same time. This, however, seems now to be impossible; and, therefore, some temporary regulation of commerce seems unavoidable. But we are as yet too uncertain of the sentiments of the Court of St. James to be able to foresee whether we shall agree with them. Mr. Hartley has been here four weeks, and nothing has been done, although he was very sanguine, before he left London, that he should send home a convention in less than half of four days.

Congress will see by Mr. Hartley's commission, that they are become the "good friends" of the King of Great Britain. Mr. Hartley, on his first arrival here, communicated to us in form an invitation from the ministers, with the knowledge and consent of the King, to all the American ministers to go to London, with the assurance that we should be there presented at Court, and treated in all respects like the ministers of any other sovereign state. He also communicated the desire of his Court, that the two powers should interchange ministers as soon as possible. I hope that the first ship will bring a minister for that Court, or a commission to some one to go there, because I think it would have been useful to us to have had one there three months ago, and that it would not be less useful now. The permanent treaty of commerce, nevertheless, should not be hastily concluded, nor before congress shall have had an opportunity to judge of the project, suggest their amendments, and transmit their orders.

No preliminaries are yet signed with the Dutch, and I am very anxious for their lot.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

WILLIAM ELLERY AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Newport, Rhode Island, 26 May, 1783.

SIR, — Permit us, the Committee of the Second Congregational Church in Newport, to call your attention for a few moments from the weighty affairs of politics, in which you are so honorably and so usefully engaged, to a matter which respects

a religious society, to whose constitution we consider you as a friend.

The early and active part which our congregation took in the opposition to the arbitrary and oppressive measures of Great Britain you may be acquainted with; but you may not be acquainted with our consequential sufferings. Our spirited conduct made us the object of ministerial and parliamentary vengeance. Sensible of the danger to which we were exposed, and finding that the British intended to take possession of Rhode Island, to avoid their implacable fury, and that we might be able to continue our exertions, both the minister and a great part of this society quitted the island. The British took possession of it in December, 1776, and held it until October, 1779, during which time our meeting-house and ministry-house were converted into barracks and hospitals; and afterwards, when the French army made a garrison of the town of Newport, those buildings were occupied in the same manner, and of course were left in a state of ruin; besides this, many of our houses were demolished or greatly damaged by the British army.

At our return, finding the town impoverished, nearly a third of its buildings destroyed, its commerce annihilated, and ourselves unable to sustain the expense of repairing our religious houses and resettling the congregation, we cast our eyes on our sister States; but many of their towns and places of public worship having suffered like injuries, no relief could be drawn from them. In this deplorable situation, we have been compelled to look to our foreign protestant brethren for assistance, and among them have thought it would not be improper to address the reformed churches in France.

Conscious of your attachment to religious liberty, in which our society is founded, and of your disposition and capacity to support that glorious cause, as well as the civil liberties of mankind, we have ventured to inclose that address to your patronage and care; and we request that you will be pleased to place it in the hands of such of the principal pastors of the reformed, as you shall think will be best disposed to circulate subscriptions and otherwise make collections for the purpose of repairing our ministry and meeting-house, and towards a ministerial fund. We would also request, that you appoint a proper person to receive the donations which may be made, and to transmit them

to William Channing and Robert Stevens, Esquires, in Newport, and assign to him thereout such commission as you shall judge reasonable.

We should have made our address to the good people in France at large; but we were not sure that such an address would be well received by them or by government. But as our houses, devoted to religion, were used in the manner that hath been mentioned, by the French as well as British troops, and considering the kind reception the former met with in Newport, perhaps Generals Rochambeau, Chattelux, Count Noailles, and other French officers might countenance our address. The Marquis de Lafayette, who well deserved, and hath obtained all the honors the United States could confer upon him, who hath done service in Rhode Island, and whose generous spirit and principles forever prompt him to benevolent actions, we do not doubt would contribute to our relief. We have ventured this hint, as we have our address, and leave it entirely with you to do as you judge proper. We would only add here, that the general assembly of this State, at a late session, repealed an old law which excluded Roman Catholics from the privileges of citizenship.

Hoping to derive some assistance from our brethren in Holland, we have drawn an application to the ministers and churches of the reformed in Holland, which, as we are not acquainted with the proper mode of address, we have taken the liberty to send open to you, and would be much obliged to you, if you would cover it, address, and transmit it.

We would attempt an apology for thus intruding and interrupting a train of thinking employed upon more extensive subjects; but we are sure we shall find a powerful apologist in your generous breast.

We most sincerely congratulate you on your successful negotiations in the United Provinces of the Netherlands, and on the share you have had in procuring preliminaries of peace so agreeable and so advantageous to the United States of America; and, heartily wishing you may enjoy a long, uninterrupted series of health and prosperity, we are, with the highest sentiments of respect, &c. &c.

William Ellery.
Henry Marchant.
Robert Stevens.
William Channing.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 30 May, 1783.

Sir, — On the 28th of this month, I received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 13th of February, which arrived at the Hague, inclosed with the ratification of the treaty with their High Mightinesses, which will be exchanged by M. Dumas, as the conferences here for the definitive treaty will not admit of my taking so long a journey at this time.

This arrival, in season to exchange the ratifications before the departure of M. Van Berckel, which will be in three weeks, is fortunate. I hope that the first ships from America will bring my letter of recall from that republic, and another minister, or credence to some one now in Europe, to take my place.

I am happy to find that any letters of mine in September last contained information that you think of consequence, although, not having my letter-book here, I am not able to recollect the subject. The final completion of the negotiation with Holland gives me a pleasure which will not be equalled but by that of the definitive treaty of peace, which languishes at present for want of decisive instructions from Mr. Hartley, in such a manner as gives cause to suspect that the present ministry are not firm in their seats.

The presence of a minister in Holland would encourage your loan of money there, but it would be quickened still more by your sending a minister to London with power to borrow money there. Emulation is the best spring; or call it rivalry or jealousy, if you will, it will get you money, if you put it in motion.

I have received two ciphers from you, sir, — one beginning with No. 1, and ending with No. 1011; the other beginning with Amsterdam, and ending with Provinces.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

FRANCIS DANA TO JOHN ADAMS.

St. Petersburg, 1 June, 1783.

Dear Sir, — By the last post I sent an open letter for Mr. Livingston, under cover to you, to give you what further information I had received relative to the memorial. The week is past, and nothing more has yet taken place. This, considering how affairs are conducted here, is not really unexpected. Patience, much patience, indeed is necessary. If I was sure congress would support me in it, I would take another step, of the propriety of which I have personally no doubt. But, to support it, congress must resolve not to send another minister here, when I quit the ground. If half a score of such geniuses as you were there, I would infallibly take it at every hazard, if I have not a satisfactory answer to my memorial.

Touching the gentleman's[1] doubt, whether the credit was necessary, he may be assured I should not have written for it, if I had not been *certain* of the custom. It is a matter of too much consequence to be taken upon slight information. The sum to be paid is six thousand roubles for each signature, and there are generally four appointed on their part, which sum falls short of the credit I asked for, more or less, as the exchange varies. It will not go beyond it. I thought it advisable to have enough, as whatever remained might be carried by me to the credit of the United States. This is so settled a custom, that every power which has acceded to the neutral confederation has paid it. Thus much to clear up scruples. We should not have heard so much about the armed neutrality in this quarter, if the case had been otherwise. I have a *curious* tale to tell of this matter. It would be a very proper place to tell that and some other things in, where you wish now and then to "throw out some stories about our peregrinations, robbers, &c." Neither you nor they know the real state of matters here, nor will they till my return, if then, which will depend upon contingencies. I fear only the effects of delusion.

It is a great satisfaction to me to find the reasons I have assigned for not making the communication you spoke of, are thought by you to be conclusive. Yet, for the *weighty* reason

[1] Dr. Franklin.

above mentioned, there is a design to keep the bubble up. It appears to be absolutely necessary for us to concern ourselves about it. This is my clear opinion; and if I was in that same place, I would give my reasons at large for it. Fear not, I will never engage you in any affair on account of your advice given as a friend to me. Where I ask it officially, and *expressly* so, the case is different. Your hints are always serviceable; if I do not follow them, they put me upon reflecting on the subject of them with more deliberation.

Mr. Hartley, you say, is to *finish* with you. Do you mean by this, as I suppose, to conclude the definitive treaty? The world tells us, and Mr. Fox seems to support it, that his business is a commercial treaty. I am ignorant, if you have such powers. I doubt it from what you last wrote me upon that subject. The West India trade, as tendered by Mr. Pitt's bill, at least, must be secured. In this quarter of the world I see the whole importance of it. I wrote to Mr. Livingston upon that subject early last winter, and proposed the same plan to him, with this difference, that we should have full liberty to export the West India commodities to *all parts* of the world; by which means we should gain a most important commerce with Europe. The same duties only must be paid as their own subjects pay upon exportation to Great Britain. This is absolutely necessary to secure the advantage of a *direct* commerce with Europe. Without it, they might enhance the price of the commodities upon us, *ad libitum*.

As to the congress and mediation which you say are talked of, I agree fully with you, that there is no need of either on our affairs. But how are you to be invited to join it, if there was, when objections are raised here by one of the mediators against the reception of a minister from the United States? It would be a curiosity, indeed, if it should happen, and yet it would not surprise me, if it should. When we once depart from fixed principles there are no inconsistencies and absurdities we may not fall into. Besides, I should not be surprised if the other part of the business than what you mention, should be thrown into the hands of 121. For I know there is an extreme jealousy entertained by the 134. 57.[1] about the treaty I have in contem-

[1] The key to Mr. Dana's cipher is missing. Most probably, the figures stand for Dr. Franklin and the French ministry.

plation. I have been told, *more than once*, we can have nothing in particular here that would render a treaty worth the expense of it. Indeed, there might be some advantage in a political connection. But this will be general to all nations. The only difference, by having a treaty, would be the paying of duties in the money of Russia instead of rix-dollars, and the expense would far exceed this advantage. I have constantly favored these ideas, and answered, congress are desirous of having a commercial treaty with this empire. They must be gratified, and it is my business to make it. If it cost them more than it is worth, it is none of my fault. Judge you, my friend, from this, and the *confidential* intelligence which I communicated to you in my letter by your son, upon some circumstances which may have fallen under your knowledge. Yours, &c.

Francis Dana.

FRANCIS DANA TO JOHN ADAMS.

St. Petersburg, 6 June, 1783.

Dear Sir, — I yesterday received a letter from your son, dated Hague, May 12th, containing some account of his route from hence to Stockholm. The matter contained in my *confidential* letter which you will receive from him, I pray you most earnestly to keep a secret, even after your arrival in America or in congress. I have most substantial reasons for making this request.

I have additional reasons for thinking that jealousy, of which I have spoken towards the close of my last letter but one, exists in full force. Yesterday I was there upon a previous appointment, relative to my main matter; yet the same kind of conversation which you will find in that letter was renewed almost word for word. It was entered into indeed more minutely than ever. Nor is this all. 165. 37. who we had agreed should be invited to the consultation upon the main matter, evidently supported the same sentiments with all his ingenuity. However, they have not yet had my real sentiments upon the subject, nor shall they have them. I know, I flatter myself, the interests of our country, as well as they do, at least. I declare to you, at the same time, that very possibly the hare would not be worth hunting in the common course. I have long had in contempla-

tion some special views in this business grounded in local knowledge. Whether I should be able to succeed in them is not certain. If I should not to a certain degree, it is always in my power to wave the whole business. It is kind in our friends to take so serious a concern in our interests, however.

I have not yet received any answer to my memorial; but I was yesterday informed, by my private friend, that I should have it on Monday or Tuesday next. By this delay, I am inclined to think they wait only for the accounts of the conclusion of the definitive treaty, when the idea of *mediation* will be done away. This is daily expected. The other objections may be then waved, and thus the matter be compounded. It would, perhaps be thought to be too humiliating to give them all up.

A safe voyage to you, &c.

FRANCIS DANA.

TO EDWARD A. HOLYOKE.

Paris, 10 June, 1783.

SIR, — Upon an intimation from my friend, Dr. Tufts, of Weymouth, that the Medical Society, of which you are president, desired to extend its connections in Europe, I ventured to apply to the chiefs of the Royal Society of Medicine, at Paris, and met with a more complaisant reception than I expected.

Inclosed, are copies of letters which have passed upon the occasion, and of the diploma, which is the result of them. The originals I shall bring with me, or send by a careful hand.

I hope the Medical Society will pardon my presumption, in going so far without their authority. But the proposition once hinted at, was received with so much earnestness, that I could not recede.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

(*Three Letters inclosed in the Preceding.*)

M. VICQ D'AZYR TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 3 Février, 1783.

MONSIEUR, — La Société Royale de Médecine après s'être empressée de contracter une association de correspondance avec

le collége de Boston (association qui la flatte infiniment) m'a chargé de vous adresser le diplôme qui constate l'union de ces deux compagnies. Elle vous prie de vouloir bien le faire parvenir aux membres illustres qui composent le collége de Boston.

Parmi le petit nombre d'exemplaires du Journal de Médecine militaire dont elle peut disposer, elle en a réservé un pour la Bibliothèque du Collége de Boston. Elle a désiré que je vous l'adresse pour cette compagnie, et elle la prie de l'agréer comme une marque de sa déférence et de son attachement. Je le joins ici. Cet exemplaire est le premier cahier pour l'année 1783. Les quatre premiers cahiers pour 1782 n'ont été données à la société qu'en nombre à peine suffisant pour ses membres résidens à Paris. J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

VICQ D'AZYR.

TO M. VICQ D'AZYR.

Paris, 28 February, 1783.

SIR, — I have received the diploma of the royal society of Medicine, and the first part of the second volume of the Journal of Military Medicine, which you have addressed to me. I have the honor to thank you for them. I shall transmit both to the Medical College of Boston, the members of which will feel highly flattered by an association with this celebrated society, making them participate in its renown as well as in the benefits of its labors. They will find in its works the aid of which they stand in need, and the means of coöperating with its salutary purposes. They will be very earnest the moment they know all that has been done for them, to signify their gratitude and their respectful regard. In the interval, before they have the power of communicating their sentiments, I pray you, sir, to beg permission for me to assure the society of the respect with which I am, &c., &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

M. LASSONE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 3 Juin, 1783.

MONSIEUR, — Je me suis trouvé à la séance de la Société Royale de Médecine lorsque M. Vicq d'Azyr nous a fait part du désir que vous lui avez témoigné de voir établir une correspond-

ance entre le Collége de Médecine de Boston et cette compagnie. Cette proposition étoit trop flatteuse pour la société pour qu'elle ne s'empressa point de vous en témoigner sa reconnoissance, par l'intermède de son secrétaire, comme j'apprends avec plaisir par votre lettre du 20 Décembre dernier, qu'il a eu soin de s'en acquitter. Soyez persuadé, monsieur, que la Société Royale, qui saisit toutes les occasions de rendre ses recherches plus généralement utiles par les liaisons qu'elle aime à contracter et à entretenir avec les différentes compagnies savantes, nationales et étrangères, ne laissera échapper aucune circonstance dans laquelle elle croira pouvoir donner au Collège de Médecine de Boston des preuves de son amitié et de son dévouement.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

LASSONE.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 16 June, 1783.

SIR, — Yesterday afternoon the duplicate of your letter of the 14th of April, No. 16, was brought in to me with the postmark "Brest" upon it. As soon as I had read it, I went out to Passy, in hopes that other despatches had arrived there, but I found none. While I was there, a packet of newspapers addressed to us all was brought in, with the postmark of Brest on it. I still hope and believe that other despatches by the same conveyance will appear in a few days; but whether they are still in the post-office, or whether the Duc de Lauzun intends to bring them in person, is uncertain.

I think, sir, there is no room to doubt the justice of your opinion, that the latitude of the Canaries is meant, and, consequently, that hostilities ceased on the whole coast of the United States on the 3d of March.

I am well aware that a variety of questions may be started upon the provisional articles. The great points of sovereignty, limits, and fisheries, are sufficiently clear. But there are too many other things in much obscurity. No one of us alone would ever have put his hand to such a writing. Yet there is no one to blame. It must be confessed that it was done in haste, but that haste was inevitable. The peace depended absolutely upon the critical moment, when that treaty was

signed. The meeting of parliament was so near, and the state of the ministry so critical, that if that opportunity had been lost there would have been at least another campaign. There were never less than three of us, and there were finally no less than three to be consulted on the other side. These inaccuracies are much to be lamented, but they were quite unavoidable. We shall endeavor to explain them in the definitive treaty, but I fear without success.

I hope, sir, you will excuse me, if I think your expressions fall short of the real merit of the Dutch. If they had accepted the Russian mediation for a separate peace, we should have seen a very formidable difference. The vast weight of the Dutch in the East Indies, being added to that of France, has influenced the minds of the natives in such a manner, as to turn the scale against England. The Cape of Good Hope was indispensable to France, and we are not yet informed what proportion of the expense of French operations in the East Indies is to be borne by the Dutch East India Company, at whose solicitations, by their agents, sent early to Versailles, they were undertaken. From twelve to fifteen British ships of the line, in the best condition, with the best officers and men, have been kept almost constantly in the North Seas to watch the Dutch, a momentous diversion which made the balance more clear in favor of the allies in the East and West Indies, as well as in the channel; and, it may be added, and that with strict truth, the battle of Doggerbank imprinted more terror on the imaginations of the British navy and nation than all the other sea engagements of the war.

Your observations of their unfortunate situation are, however, very just; and their exertions have not been such as they might and ought to have been. But this was the fault of the enemies of France in Holland, not of her friends; and, unhappily, those enemies are to be gratified by the terms of peace prescribed to that power, and those friends mortified. And this misfortune probably arises from the instructions in question, by which they made themselves of no importance, instead of acting the part of a sovereign, independent, and respectable power. If they had held their own negotiation in their own hands, they would probably have obtained better terms. I could mention many facts and anecdotes of much importance; but these have been com-

municated to me in confidence, and as this is a discussion that concerns us only indirectly, and as our instructions were parallel to theirs, although the execution of them was different, and the event different, I shall wave any further observations upon the subject.

We are happy to learn that congress have ratified the treaty, imperfect as it is, and that each side has released its prisoners. Mr. Hartley communicated to us officially, two days ago, that orders were gone to New York to evacuate the United States.

Dr. Franklin has never made any use of the bills for my salary, and I have never received any part of them. I shall easily settle that matter when I get home, which your letter encourages me to hope will be very soon. The connections I have formed in Holland may be of use to the public wherever I may be, in America or elsewhere, as well as even in that country itself. Those connections will readily become those of any minister congress may send there. It cost me all my happiness, and had very nearly cost me my life to form them; it cost me more; it has left me in an ill state of health which I never shall fully repair. I shall carry Holland in my veins to my grave. It will cost no man any thing to go there now. His mind will be at ease, and he will have spirits necessary to take care to preserve his health. To me it has become physically necessary, as well as a moral and religious duty, to join my family. This can be done only by going to them, or bringing them to me; and to bring them to Holland is what I cannot think of, both because that on account of my own health, as well as theirs, and on other considerations, I should not choose to live among those putrid lakes, and because I think I can do my country more and better service at home than there.

I will not disguise another motive, which would be altogether insurmountable, if it were alone. I do not think it consistent with the honor of the United States, any more than with my own, for me to stay in Holland, after the appointment of any other minister whatsoever to the mission upon which I came to Europe, and which has been taken from me without assigning any reasons. Congress are the sovereign judges for themselves and the public of the persons proper for all services, excepting that every citizen is a sovereign judge for himself. I have never adopted the principle, that it is a citizen's duty to accept of any

trust that is pointed out to him, unless he approves of it. On the contrary, I think it a right and a duty, that no law of society can take away, for every man to judge for himself, whether he can serve consistently with his own honor, and the honor and interest of the public.

When the existence of our country and her essential interests were at stake, it was a duty to run all risks, to stifle every feeling, to sacrifice every interest; and this duty I have discharged with patience and perseverance, and with a success that can be attributed only to Providence. But, in time of peace, the public in less danger abroad than at home, knowing I can do more good at home, I should do a very wrong thing to remove my family to stay in Holland, merely for the sake of holding an honorable commission, making and receiving bows and compliments, and eating splendid suppers at Court.

There is one piece of advice I beg leave to offer to the minister who may go to Holland, respecting a future loan of money. It is, to inquire whether the house of Hope would undertake a loan for us, either in conjunction with the houses who have the present one, or with any of them, or alone. In my private opinion, which ought to be kept as secret as possible, we might obtain a large loan in that way, and that we cannot in any other. The people in that interest have the money. I am not personally known to that house, nor any one of them to me; but I know they are all powerful in money matters, and I believe they would engage.

The happy turn given to the discontents of the army by the General, is consistent with his character, which, as you observe, is above all praise, as every character is whose rule and object are duty, not interest, nor glory; which I think has been strictly true with the General from the beginning, and I trust will continue to the end. May he long live, and enjoy his own reflections and the confidence and affections of a free, grateful, and virtuous people.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 23 June, 1783.

Sir, — The British nation and ministry are in a very unsettled state; they find themselves in a new situation, and have not digested any plan. Ireland is in a new situation; she is independent of parliament, and the English know not how to manage her. To what an extent she will claim a right of trading with the United States, is unknown. Canada, too, and Nova Scotia are in a new situation; the former, they say, must have a new government. But what form to give them, and, indeed, what kind of government they are capable of, or would be agreeable to them, is uncertain. Nothing is digested.

There is a party, composed probably of refugees, friends of the old hostile system, and fomented by emissaries of several foreign nations, who do not wish a cordial reconciliation and sincere friendship between Great Britain and the United States, who clamor for the conservation of the navigation act and the carrying trade. If these should succeed so far as to excite parliament or the ministry to adopt a contracted principle, to exclude us from the West India trade, and from trading with Canada and Nova Scotia, and from carrying freely in vessels belonging to any one of the thirteen States, the production of any other to Great Britain, the consequences may be to perplex us for a time, may bind us closer to France, Spain, Holland, Germany, Italy, and the northern nations, and thus be fatal to Great Britain, without being finally very hurtful to us.

The nations of Europe, who have islands in the West Indies, have at this moment a delicate part to take. Upon their present decisions, great things will depend. The commerce of the West India Islands is a part of the American system of commerce. They can neither do without us, nor we without them. The Creator has placed us upon the globe in such a situation, that we have occasion for each other. We have the means of assisting each other, and politicians and artful contrivances cannot separate us. Wise statesmen, like able artists of every kind, study nature, and their works are perfect in proportion as they conform to her laws. Obstinate attempts to prevent the islands and the continent, by force or policy, from deriving from each

other those blessings which nature has enabled them to afford, will only put both to thinking of means of coming together. And an injudicious regulation at this time may lay a foundation for intimate combinations between the islands and the continent, which otherwise would not be wished for or thought of by either.

If the French, Dutch, and Danes have common sense, they will profit of any blunder Great Britain may commit upon this occasion. The ideas of the British cabinet and merchants at present are so confused upon all these subjects, that we can get them to agree to nothing. I still think that the best policy of the United States is, to send a minister to London to negotiate a treaty of commerce, instructed to conclude nothing, not the smallest article, until he has sent it to congress, and received their approbation. In the mean time, congress may admit any British or Irish ships that have arrived, or may arrive, to trade as they please.

For my own part, I confess I would not advise congress to bind themselves to any thing that is not reasonable and just. If we should agree to revive the trade upon the old footing, it is the utmost that can, with a color of justice or modesty, be requested of us. This is not equal, but might be borne. Rather than go further, and deny ourselves the freight from the West Indies to Europe, at least to Great Britain, especially rather than give away our own carrying trade, by agreeing that the ships of one State should not carry to Great Britain the produce of another, I would be for entering into still closer connections with France, Spain, and Holland, and purchase of them, at the expense of Great Britain, what she has not wisdom enough to allow us for her own good.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 27 June, 1783.

SIR, — Yesterday, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself, met to prepare the definitive treaty, and made so much progress in it, that to-morrow we shall be ready to communicate to Mr. Hart-

ley the result. But I have small hopes of obtaining any thing more by the definitive treaty.

The Duke of Manchester and Count d'Aranda have arranged every thing between England and Spain, and are ready to finish for their two courts. France, I presume, waits only for Holland, or perhaps for some other negotiation with the Imperial Courts. If all the other parties were now to declare themselves ready, we should be puzzled. In such a case, however, I am determined (and I believe, but do not know, that my colleagues would join me) to declare myself ready to sign the provisional treaty, *totidem verbis*, for a definitive treaty.

From all I can learn, I am persuaded we shall gain nothing by any further negotiation. If we obtain any thing by way of addition or explanation, we shall be obliged to give more for it than it is worth. If the British minister refuses to agree to such changes as we may think reasonable, and refuses to sign the provisional articles as definitive ones, I take it for granted, France will not sign till we do. If they should, we are still safe; for the provisional articles are to *constitute* the treaty as soon as France has made peace, and I should rather leave it on that footing than make any material alteration.

I have put these several cases, because I should be surprised at nothing from the present British ministry. If they have any plan at all, it is a much less generous one towards America than that of their immediate predecessors. If Shelburne, Townshend, Pitt, &c., had continued, we should have had every thing settled long ago, to our entire satisfaction and to the infinite advantage of Great Britain and America, in such a manner as would have restored good humor and affection, as far as in the nature of things they can now be restored.

After the great point of acknowledging our independence was got over, by issuing Mr. Oswald's last commission, the Shelburne administration conducted themselves towards us like men of sense and honor. The present administration has discovered neither understanding nor sincerity. The present British administration is unpopular, and it is in itself so heterogeneous a composition, that it seems impossible it should last long. Their present design seems to be not to commit themselves by agreeing to any thing. As soon as any thing is done, somebody will clamor. While nothing is done, it is not known what to clamor

about. If there should be a change in favor of the ministry that made the peace, and a dissolution of this profligate league, which they call the coalition, it would be much for the good of all who speak the English language. If fame says true, the coalition was formed at gambling tables, and is conducted as it was formed, upon no other than gambling principles.

Such is the fate of a nation which stands tottering on the brink of a precipice, with a debt of two hundred and fifty-six millions sterling on its shoulders; the interest of which, added to the peace establishment only, exceeds by above a million annually all their revenues, enormously and intolerably as they are already taxed. The only chance they have for salvation is in a reform, and in recovering the affection of America. The last ministry were sensible of this, and acted accordingly. The present ministry are so far from being sensible of it, or caring about it, that they seem to me to be throwing the last dice for the destruction of their country.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 3 July, 1783.

SIR, — On the last ambassador's day, which was last Tuesday, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself waited on M. de Vergennes, who told us he thought he had agreed with the Duke of Manchester, but that his Grace had not yet received the positive approbation of his Court. The Count advised us to make a visit all together to the ambassadors of the two Imperial Courts. Accordingly, yesterday morning, we went first to the Count de Mercy Argenteau, the ambassador of the Emperor of Germany and King of Hungary and Bohemia. His Excellency was not at home, so we left a card.

We went next to the Prince Bariatinski, Minister Plenipotentiary from the Empress of Russia; our servant asked if the Prince was at home, and received for answer, that he was. We were shown into the Prince's apartment, who received us very politely. While we were here, Mr. Markow came in. He is also a minister plenipotentiary adjoined to the Prince in the affair of the mediation. I told him we proposed to do ourselves the honor

of calling on him. He answered, "As you are an old acquaintance, I shall be very happy to see you." Whether this was a turn of politeness, or whether it was a political distinction, I know not. We shall soon know, by his returning or not returning the visit. The Prince asked me where I lodged, and I told him. This indicates an intention to return the visit.

We went next to the Dutch ambassador's, M. Lestevenon de Berkenrode. He was not at home, or not visible. Next, to the Baron de Blome, Envoy Extraordinary of the King of Denmark; not at home. Next, to M. Markow. The porter answered, that he was at home. We alighted, and were going to his apartment, when we were told that he was not come in. We left a card, and went to the other Dutch ambassador's, M. Brantzen, who was not at home; *en passant*, we left a card at the Swedish minister's, and returned home, the heat being too excessive to pursue our visits any further.

Thus, we have made visits to all the ministers who are to be present at the signature of the definitive treaty. Whether the ministers of the Imperial Courts will be present, I know not. There are many appearances of a coldness between France and Russia, and the Emperor seems to waver between two opinions, whether to join in the war that threatens, or to avoid it. Perhaps the ministers of the Imperial Courts will write for instructions, whether to return our visit or not.

Although in your latest letters you say nothing of my resignation or the acceptance of it, I expect to receive it soon, and then I shall have an opportunity to settle the affair of my salary at Philadelphia.

After reading your letters to me, I went out to Passy to see those addressed to us all. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself (Mr. Laurens being still in England) read them all over together. We shall do all in our power to procure the advantages in the definitive treaty to which we are instructed to attend. The state of parties is such in England, that it is impossible to foresee when there will be a ministry who will dare to take any step at all. The coalition between Lord North and his connections, and Mr. Fox and his, is a rope of sand. Mr. Fox, by pushing the vote in the house of commons, disapproving the peace, and by joining so many of the old ministers in the new administration, has justly excited so many jealousies of his

sincerity, that no confidence can be placed in him by us. I am extremely sorry that the most amiable men in the nation, — Portland and the Cavendishes, — should have involved themselves in the same reproach.

In short, at present, Shelburne, Pitt, Townshend, and the administration of which they were members, seem to have been the only ones who for a moment had just notions of their country and ours. Whether these men, if now called to power, would pursue their former ideas, I know not. The Bible teaches us not to put our trust in princes, and *a fortiori* in ministers of state.

The West India commerce now gives us most anxiety. If the former British ministry had stood, we might have secured it from England ; and, in that case, France would have been obliged to admit us to their islands, *se defendendo*. The first maxim of a statesman, as well as that of a statuary or a painter, should be to study nature ; to cast his eyes round about his country, and see what advantages nature has given it. This was well attended to in the boundary between the United States and Canada, and in the fisheries. The commerce of the West India Islands falls necessarily into the natural system of the commerce of the United States. We are necessary to them, and they to us ; and there will be a commerce between us. If the governments forbid it, it will be carried on clandestinely. France can more easily connive at a contraband trade than England. But we ought to wish to avoid the temptation to this. I believe that neither France nor England will allow us to transport the productions of their islands to other parts of Europe.

The utmost we may hope to obtain, would be permission to import the productions of the French islands into France, giving bond to land them in some port of that kingdom, and the productions of the English islands into some port of Great Britain, giving bonds to land them there. It must, however, be the care of the minister who may have to negotiate a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, to obtain as ample freedom in this trade as possible.

While I was writing the above, my servant announced the imperial ambassador, whom I rose to receive. He said, he was happy that the circumstances of the times afforded him an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with me, which he hoped would be improved into a more intimate one. I said,

his Excellency did me great honor, and begged him to sit, which he did, and fell into a conversation of an hour. We ran over a variety of subjects, particularly the commerce which might take place between the United States and Germany, by the way of Trieste and Fiume and the Austrian Netherlands, and the great disposition in Germany to migration to America. He says he knows the country round about Trieste very well, having an estate there; that it is a very extensive and a very rich country which communicates with that maritime city, and that the navigation of the Adriatic Sea, though long, is not dangerous. I asked him what we should do with the Barbary powers. He said, he thought all the powers of the world ought to unite in the suppression of such a detestable race of pirates, and that the Emperor had lately made an insinuation to the Porte upon the subject. I asked him, if he thought France and England would agree to such a project, observing that I had heard that some Englishmen had said, "if there were no Algiers, England ought to build one." He said, he could not answer for England.

It is unnecessary to repeat any more of the conversation, which turned upon the sober, frugal and industrious character of the Germans, the best cultivators in Europe, and the dishonorable traffic of some of the German princes in men, a subject he introduced and enlarged on himself. I said nothing about it. Rising up to take leave, he repeated several compliments he had made when he first came in, and added, "the Count de Vergennes will do me the honor to dine with me one of these days, and I hope to have that of your company. We will then talk of an affair upon which the Count de Vergennes will speak to you beforehand."

This shows there is something in agitation, but what it is I cannot conjecture; whether it is to induce us to make the compliment to the two Imperial Courts to sign the definitive treaty as mediators, whether there is any project of an association for the liberty of navigation, or whether it is any other thing, I cannot guess at present, but I will write you as soon as I know. Whatever it is, we must treat it with respect, but we shall be very careful how we engage our country in measures of consequence, without being clear of our powers, and without the instructions of congress.

I went out to Passy, and found from Mr. Jay, that he had made his visit there in the course of the day, but had said nothing to Dr. Franklin or him about the dinner with the Count de Vergennes. In the course of the day, I had visits from the Prince Bariatinski and M. de Markow, the two ministers of the Empress of Russia. The porter told these gentlemen's servants that I was at home; but they did not come up. They only sent up their cards. While I was gone to Passy, Monsieur de Blome, Envoy Extraordinary from the King of Denmark, called and left his card. Thus the point of etiquette seems to be settled, and we are to be treated in character by all the powers of Europe.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 5 July, 1783.

SIR, — Your favors of the 12th and 29th of May were delivered to me on the 3d of this month by Captain Barney. Every assistance in my power shall be given to Mr. Barclay. Mr. Grand will write you the amount of all the bills which have been paid in Holland, which were accepted by me. You may banish your fears of a double payment of any one bill. I never accepted a bill without taking down in writing a very particular description of it, nor without examining the book to see whether it had been accepted before. I sent regularly, in the time of it, copies of these acceptances to Dr. Franklin, and I have now asked him to lend them to me, that I may copy them and send them to you. The doctor has promised to look up my letters, and let me have them. The originals are at the Hague, with multitudes of other papers, which I want every day.

Among the many disagreeable circumstances attending my duty in Europe, it is not the least, that instead of being fixed to any one station, I have been perpetually danced about from "post to pillar," unable to have my books and papers with me, unable to have about me the conveniences of a housekeeper, for health, pleasure, or business, but yet subjected in many articles to double expenses.

Mr. Livingston has not informed me of any determination of congress upon my letter to you of the 17th of November, which distresses me much on Mr. Thaxter's account, who certainly merits more than he has received, or can receive, without the favor of congress.

I thank you, sir, most affectionately, for your kind congratulation on the peace. Our late enemies always clamor against a peace, but this one is better for them than they had reason to expect after so mad a war. Our countrymen, too, I suppose, are not quite satisfied. This thing and that thing should have been otherwise, no doubt. If any man blames us, I wish him no other punishment than to have, if that were possible, just such another peace to negotiate, exactly in our situation. I cannot look back upon this event without the most affecting sentiments. When I consider the number of nations concerned, the complication of interests extending all over the globe, the characters of actors, the difficulties which attended every step of the progress, how every thing labored in England, France, Spain, and Holland, that the armament at Cadiz was upon the point of sailing, which would have rendered another campaign inevitable, that another campaign would have probably involved France in a continental war, as the Emperor would in that case have joined Russia against the Porte, that the British ministry was then in so critical a situation, that its duration for a week or a day depended upon its making peace, that if that ministry had been changed, it could have been succeeded only either by North and company or by the coalition, that it is certain that neither North and company, nor the coalition, would have made peace upon any terms that either we or the other powers would have agreed to, and that all these difficulties were dissipated by one decided step of the British and American ministers, I feel too strongly a gratitude to heaven for having been conducted safely through the storm, to be very solicitous whether we have the approbation of mortals or not.

A delay of one day might, and probably would, have changed the ministry in England, in which case all would have been lost. If, after we had agreed with Mr. Oswald, we had gone to Versailles to show the result to the Count de Vergennes, you would have been this moment at war, and God knows how or when you would have got out. What would have been the course?

The Count de Vergennes would have sprinkled us with compliments, the holy water of a court. He would have told us, "you have done, gentlemen, very well for your country. You have gained a great deal. I congratulate you upon it, but you must not sign till we are ready; we must sign altogether here in this room." What would have been our situation? We must have signed against this advice, as Mr. Laurens says he would have done, and as I believe Mr. Jay and I should have done, which would have been the most marked affront that could have been offered, or we must have waited for France and Spain, which would have changed the ministry in England, and lost the whole peace as certainly as there is a world in being. When a few frail vessels are navigating among innumerable mountains of ice, driven by various winds and drawn by various currents, and a narrow crevice appears to one, by which all may escape, if that one improves the moment and sets the example, it will not do to stand upon ceremonies, and ask which shall go first, or that all may go together.

I hope you will excuse this little excursion, and believe me to be, with great respect and esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 7 July, 1783.

Sir, — We cannot as yet obtain from Mr. Hartley or his principals an explicit consent to any one proposition whatever. Yet England and France, and England and Spain are probably agreed, and Holland, I suppose, must comply. Our last resource must be to say, we are ready to sign the provisional treaty, *totidem verbis*, as the definitive treaty.

I think it is plain that the British ministry do not intend to sign any treaty till parliament rises. There are such dissensions in the cabinet, that they apprehend a treaty laid before parliament, if it did not obtain advantages, of which they have no hopes, would furnish materials to overthrow them. A new administration is talked of, under Lord Temple.

The West India commerce is now the object that interests us the most nearly. At dinner, with the Duc de la Vauguyon,

on Saturday last, he told me that he believed the commerce between the French West India Islands and the United States would be confined to ships built in France, and navigated by French seamen. "So then, M. le Duc," said I, laughing, "you have adopted the ideas of the British navigation act. But what if the United States should adopt them, too, and make a law, that no commerce should be carried on with any West India Islands,— French, English, Spanish, Dutch, or Danish,— but in ships built in America, and navigated with American seamen? We can import sugar from Europe. But give me leave to tell you, that this trade can never be carried on by the French; their vessels are all large and navigated by a great number of seamen, and your navigators are too slow. The trade itself was only profitable to us as a system; and little vessels, with a few hands, run away at any season of the year, from any creek or river, with a multitude of little articles collected in haste. Your merchants and mariners have neither the patience to content themselves with much and long labor, and dangerous voyages for small profits, nor have they the economy, nor can they navigate vessels with so few hands." "Ay, but we think," said the Duke, "if we do not try, we shall never learn to do these things as well and as cheap as you." The Duke told me he had had, some days before, a great deal of conversation with the Count de Vergennes, and he found he had a great many good ideas of commerce. The Count himself told me, a few weeks ago, "in our regulations of the commerce between our islands and you, we must have regard to our shipping and our nurseries of seamen for our marine; for," said he, smiling politely enough, "without a marine, we cannot go to your succor."

In short, France begins to grow, for a moment, avaricious of navigation and seamen. But it is certain, that neither the form of government nor the national character can possibly admit of great success in it. Navigation is so dangerous a business, and requires so much patience, and produces so little profit among nations who understand it best, and have the best advantages for it, where property is most secure, lawsuits soonest and cheapest ended, and by fixed, certain laws, that the French can never interfere much with the Dutch or Americans in ship building or carrying trade. If any French merchants ever begin to carry on this commerce between America and the islands, they will break

to pieces very soon, and then some new plan must be adopted. The English, for aught I know, will make a similar law, that the communication between us and their islands shall be carried on in British built ships, or ships built in Canada or Nova Scotia, and navigated by British seamen. In this case, we must try what we can do with the Dutch and Danes. But the French and English will endeavor to persuade them to the same policy; for the Duc de la Vauguyon told me that he thought it a common tie (*lien commun*). In this they will not succeed, and we must make the most we can of the Dutch friendship, for luckily the merchants and regency of Amsterdam had too much wit to exclude us from their islands by the treaty. Happily, congress will have a Dutch minister with whom they may consult upon this matter, as well as many others; but I should think it would not be convenient to invite an English or French minister to be present at the consultation.

I am at a loss, sir, to guess what propositions made to us congress have been informed of, which they had not learned from us. None have been made to us. The Dutch ambassadors did once propose a meeting to us, and had it at my house. Dr. Franklin came, but Mr. Jay did not, and Mr. Laurens was absent. The ambassadors desired to know, whether we had power to enter into any engagements, provided France, Spain, and Holland should agree to any, in support of the armed neutrality. We showed them the resolution of congress, of the 5th of October, 1780, and told them that Mr. Dana had been since vested with a particular commission to the same effect. We never heard any thing further about it. Not seeing at the time any probability that any thing would come of this, nor intending to do any thing of any consequence in it, if we should hear further of it, without the further orders of congress, we did not think it necessary to write any thing about it, at least till it should put on a more serious appearance. If the Count de Mercy's dinner, to which we are to be invited, with the Count de Vergennes, should produce any insinuations on this subject, (which I do not, however, expect) we shall inform you, and request the orders of congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 9 July, 1783.

Sir, — Since the dangerous fever I had in Amsterdam, two years ago, I have never enjoyed my health. Through the whole of the past winter and spring, I have suffered under weaknesses and pains which have scarcely permitted me to do business. The excessive heats of the last week or two have brought on me a fever again, which exhausts one in such a manner as to be very discouraging, and incapacitates one for every thing. In short, nothing but a return to America will ever restore my health, if even that should do it. In these circumstances, however, we have negotiations to go through, and your despatches to answer.

The liberal sentiments in England, respecting the trade, are all lost for the present, and we can get no answer to any thing. It is the same thing with the Dutch. One of the Dutch ambassadors told me yesterday, at Versailles, that now, for five weeks, the English had never said one word to them, nor given them any answer. These things indicate that the ministry do not think themselves permanent.

The Count de Vergennes asked Dr. Franklin and me, yesterday, if we had made our visits. We answered, that we had, and that they had been promptly returned. "The thing in agitation," said the Count, "is for you to determine whether your definitive treaty shall be signed under the mediation of the two Imperial Courts, or not. Ours and the Spanish treaty with England are to be so finished, and if you determine in favor of it, you have only to write a letter to the ministers of the Imperial Courts who are here." I told him, in the present case, I did not know what a mediation meant. He smiled, but did not seem to know any better than I; at least, he did not explain it. We told him we would determine upon it soon.

How we shall determine, I cannot say. For my own part, I see no harm in accepting the mediation, nor any other good, than a compliment to the two empires. In Europe it may be thought an honor to us, and, therefore, I shall give my voice, as at present informed, in favor of it, as it seems rather to be the inclination of the Count de Vergennes that we should.

Your late despatches, sir, are not well adapted to give spirits to a melancholy man, or to cure one sick with a fever. It is not possible for me, at present, to enter into a long detail in answer to them. You will be answered, I suppose, by all the gentlemen jointly. In the mean time, I beg leave to say to you a few words upon two points.

1st. The separate article never appeared to me of any consequence to conceal from this Court. It was an agreement we had a right to make; it contained no injury to France or Spain. Indeed, I know not what France has, or ever had, to do with it. If it had been communicated to this Court, it would probably have been by them communicated to Spain, and she might have thought more about it than it was worth. But how you could conceive it possible for us to treat at all with the English upon supposition that we had communicated every, the minutest thing, to this Court, when this Court were neither obliged, nor thought proper to communicate any thing whatever to us, I know not. We were bound by treaty no more than they to communicate. The instructions were found to be absolutely impracticable. That they were too suddenly published is very true.

2dly. A communication of the treaty to this Court, after it was agreed upon, and before it was signed, would have infallibly prevented the whole peace. In the first place, it was very doubtful, or rather, on the contrary, it is certain, the English minister never would have consented that we should communicate it. We might, it is true, have done it without his consent or knowledge; but what would have been the consequence? The French minister would have said, the terms were very good for us, but we must not sign till they signed; and this would have been a continuance of the war for another year, at least. It was not so much from an apprehension that the French would have exerted themselves to get away from us terms that were agreed on, that they were withheld. It was then too late; and we have reason to apprehend that all of this kind had been done which could be done. We knew they were often insinuating to the British ministers things against us, respecting the fisheries, tories, &c., during the negotiation, and Mr. Fitzherbert told me that the Count de Vergennes had "fifty times reproached him for ceding the fisheries, and said it was ruining the English and French commerce both." It was not

suspicion, it was certain knowledge, that they were against us on the points of the tories, fisheries, Mississippi, and the western country. All this knowledge, however, did not influence us to conceal the treaty. We did not in fact conceal it. Dr. Franklin communicated the substance of it to the Count and M. de Rayneval. So did I. In a long conversation with the Count and M. de Rayneval together, I told them the substance of what was agreed upon, and what we further insisted on, and the English then disputed.

But the signing before them is the point. This we could not have done, if we had shown the treaty, and told them we were ready. The Count would certainly have said to us, you must not sign till we sign. To have signed after this would have been more disagreeable to him and to us too. Yet we must have signed or lost the peace. The peace depended on a day. Parliament had been waiting long, and once prorogued. The minister was so pressed, he could not have met parliament and held his place, without an agreement upon terms at least with America. If we had not signed, the ministry would have been changed, and the coalition come in, and the whole world knows the coalition would not have made peace upon the present terms, and, consequently, not at all this year. The iron was struck in the few critical moments when it was of a proper heat, and has been moulded into a handsome vessel. If it had been suffered to cool, it would have flown in pieces like glass. Our countrymen have great reason to rejoice that they have obtained so good a peace, when, and as they did. With the present threatening appearances of a northern war, which will draw in France, if our peace was still to be made, we might find cause to tremble for many great advantages that are now secured. I believe the Count himself, if he were now to speak his real sentiments, would say he is very glad we signed when we did, and that without asking his consent.

The Duc de la Vauguyon told me and M. Brantzen together, last Saturday, "if you had not signed when you did, we should not have signed when we did." If they had not signed when they did, D'Estaing would have sailed from Cadiz, and, in that case, nobody would have signed to this day. It is not possible for men to be in more disagreeable circumstances than we were. We are none of us men of principles or dispositions to take

pleasure in going against your sentiments, sir, much less those of congress. But, in this case, if we had not done it, our country would have lost advantages beyond computation.

On Monday, sir, we pursued our visits, and to-day we finish. Yesterday, at Court, all the foreign ministers behaved to us without reserve; as members of the *corps diplomatique*, so that we shall no longer see those lowering countenances, solemn looks, distant bows, and other peculiarities, which have been sometimes diverting and sometimes provoking for so many years. I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 10 July, 1783.

Sir, — In the present violent heat of the weather and feverish state of my health, I cannot pretend to sit long at my pen, and must pray you to accept of a few short hints only.

To talk in a general style of confidence in the French Court, &c., is to use a general language which may mean almost any thing or almost nothing. To a certain degree, and as far as the treaties and engagements extend, I have as much confidence in the French Court as congress has, or even as you, sir, appear to have. But if by confidence in the French Court is meant an opinion, that the French office of foreign affairs would be advocates with the English for our rights to the fisheries, or to the Mississippi River, or our western territory, or advocates to persuade the British ministers to give up the cause of the refugees, and make parliamentary provision for them, I own I have no such confidence, and never had. Seeing and hearing what I have seen and heard, I must have been an idiot to have entertained such confidence; I should be more of a Machiavelian, or a Jesuit, than I ever was or will be, to counterfeit it to you or to congress.

M. Marbois' letter is to me full proof of the principles of the Count de Vergennes. Why? Because I know (for it was personally communicated to me upon my passage home, by M. Marbois himself) the intimacy and confidence there is between these two. And I know further, that letter contains sentiments

concerning the fisheries diametrically opposite to those which M. Marbois repeatedly expressed to me upon the passage, namely: "That the Newfoundland fishery was our right, and we ought to maintain it." From whence I conclude, M. Marbois' sentiments have been changed by the instructions of the minister. To what purpose is it where this letter came from? Is it less genuine, whether it came from Philadelphia, Versailles, or London? What if it came through English hands? Is there less weight, less evidence in it for that? Are the sentiments more just or more friendly to us for that?

M. de Rayneval's correspondence, too, with Mr. Jay. M. de Rayneval is a *chef de bureau.* But we must be very ignorant of all courts not to know that an under secretary of state dares not carry on such a correspondence without the knowledge, consent, and orders of the principal.

There is another point now in agitation, in which the French will never give us one good word. On the contrary, they will say every thing they can think of, to persuade the English to deprive us of the trade of their West India Islands. They have already, with their emissaries, been the chief cause of the change of sentiments in London, on this head, against us. In general, they see with pain every appearance of returning real and cordial friendship, such as may be permanent, between us and Great Britain. On the contrary, they see with pleasure every seed of contention between us. The tories are an excellent engine of mischief between us, and are therefore very precious. Exclusion from the West India Islands will be another. I hold it to be the indispensable duty of my station not to conceal from congress these truths. Do not let us be dupes under the idea of being grateful. Innumerable anecdotes happen daily to show that these sentiments are general. In conversation, a few weeks ago, with the Duc de la Vauguyon, upon the subject of the West India trade, I endeavored to convince him that France and England both ought to admit us freely to their islands. He entered into a long argument to prove that both ought to exclude us. At last, I said the English were a parcel of *sots* to exclude us; for the consequence would be, that in fifteen or twenty years we should have another war with them. *Tant mieux! tant mieux! je vous en félicite,*" cried the Duke, with great pleasure. "*Tant mieux pour nous,*" said I; because

we shall conquer from the English, in that case, all their islands, the inhabitants of which would now declare for us, if they dared. But it will not be the better for the English. They will be the dupes, if they lay a foundation for it. "Yes," said the Duke, "I think you will have another war with the English." And in this wish he expressed the vows of every Frenchman upon the face of the earth. If, therefore, we have it in contemplation to avoid a future war with the English, do not let us have too much confidence in the French that they will favor us in this view. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 10 July, 1783.

SIR, — Upon the receipt of the despatches by Barney, I sent off your letters for Messrs. Willink & Co., and I received last night an answer to the letter I wrote them upon the occasion. They have engaged to remit Mr. Grand a million and a half of livres in a month, which has relieved Mr. Grand from his anxiety.

This Court has refused to Dr. Franklin any more money. They are apprehensive of being obliged to take a part in the northern war, and their own financiers have not enough of the confidence of the public to obtain money for their own purposes.

Your design of sending cargoes of tobacco and other things to Amsterdam, to Messrs. Willink & Co., is the best possible to support our credit there. The more you send, the more money will be obtained. Send a minister, too; residing there, he may promote it much. It is a misfortune that I have not been able to be there; but this post cannot be deserted. Instruct your minister to inquire, whether the house of Hope could be persuaded to engage with Willink in a new loan. This should be done with secrecy and discretion. If that house would undertake it, you would find money enough for your purpose; for, I rely upon it, the States will adopt a plan immediately for the effectual payment of interest. This is indispensable. The foundation of a happy government can only be laid in justice; and as soon as the public shall see that provision is made for this, you will no longer want money.

It is a maxim among merchants and moneyed men, that "every man has credit who does not want it." It is equally true of states. We shall want it but little longer, if the States make provision for the payment of interest, and, therefore, we shall have enough of it. There is not a country in the world whose credit ought to be so good, because there is none equally able to pay.

Inclosed is a pamphlet of Dr. Price for your comfort. You will see by it, that the only nation we have reason to fear, wants credit so much, that she is not likely to have it always, and this is our security. By some hints from Mr. Hartley, he will probably return to London, and not be here again. The present ministry is so undecided and feeble, that it is at least doubtful whether they will make the definitive treaty of peace.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Paris, 11 July, 1783.

SIR, — In my letter to you of yesterday, I hinted in confidence at an application to the house of Hope. This is a very delicate measure. I was induced to think of it, merely by a conversation which M. Van Berckel (who will soon be with you, as he sailed the 26th of June from the Texel,) had with M. Dumas. It would be better to be steady to the three houses already employed, if that is possible. You will now be able to converse freely with that minister upon the subject. I should not advise you to take any decisive resolution at Philadelphia, but leave it to your minister to act as shall appear to him best upon the spot. The houses now employed are well esteemed, and, I hope, will do very well. But no house in the republic has the force of that of Hope.

All depends, however, upon the measures to be taken by congress and the States for ascertaining their debts, and a regular discharge of the interest. The ability of the people to make such an establishment cannot be doubted; and the inclination of no man who has a proper sense of public honor can be called in question. The thirteen States, in relation to the discharge of the debts of congress, must consider themselves as one body,

animated by one soul. The stability of our confederation at home, our reputation abroad, our power of defence, the confidence and affection of the people of one State towards those of another, all depend upon it. Without a sacred regard to public justice, no society can exist; it is the only tie which can unite men's minds and hearts in pursuit of the common interest.

The commerce of the world is now open to us, and our exports and imports are of so large amount, and our connections will be so large and extensive, that the least stain upon our character in this respect will lose us in a very short time advantages of greater pecuniary value than all our debt amounts to. The moral character of our people is of infinitely greater worth than all the sums in question. Every hesitation, every uncertainty about paying or receiving a just debt, diminishes that sense of the moral obligation of public justice which ought to be kept pure, and carefully cultivated in every American mind. Creditors at home and abroad, the army, the navy, every man who has a well-founded claim upon the public, have an unalienable right to be satisfied, and this by the fundamental principles of society. Can there ever be content and satisfaction, can there ever be peace and order, can there ever be industry or decency without it? To talk of a sponge to wipe out this debt, or of reducing or diminishing it below its real value, in a country so abundantly able to pay the last farthing, would betray a total ignorance of the first principles of national duty and interest.

Let us leave these odious speculations to countries that can plead a necessity for them, and where corruption has arrived at its last stages; where infamy is scarcely felt, and wrong may as well assume one shape as another, since it must prevail in some. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 11 July, 1783.

SIR,—As there are certain particulars in which it has appeared to me that the friendship of a French minister has been problematical at least, or rather, has not existed at all, I have freely men-

tioned them to congress; because I hold it to be the first duty of a public minister, in my situation, to conceal no important truth of this kind from his masters.

But ingratitude is an odious vice, and ought to be held in detestation by every American citizen. We ought to distinguish, therefore, between those points for which we are not obliged to our allies and those in which we are.

I think, then, we are under no particular obligations of gratitude to them for the fisheries, the boundaries, exemption from the tories, or for the progress of our negotiations in Europe.

We are under obligations of gratitude for making the treaty with us at the time when they did, for those sums of money which they have generously given us, and for those even which they have lent us, which I hope we shall punctually pay, and be thankful still for the loan, for the fleet and army they sent to America, and for all the important services they did. By other mutual exertions, a dangerous rival to them, and I may be almost warranted in saying, an imperious master both to them and us, has been brought to reason, and put out of the power to do harm to either. In this respect, however, our allies are more secure than we. The house of Bourbon has acquired a great accession of strength, while their hereditary enemy has been weakened one half, and incurably crippled.

The French are, besides, a good-natured and humane nation, very respectable in arts, letters, arms, and commerce, and, therefore, motives of interest, honor, and convenience join themselves to those of friendship and gratitude, to induce us to wish for the continuance of their friendship and alliance. The Provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia, in the hands of the English, are a constant warning to us to have a care of ourselves, and, therefore, a continuance of the friendship and alliance of France is of importance to our tranquillity, and even to our safety. There is nothing which will have a greater effect to overawe the English, and induce them to respect us and our rights, than the reputation of a good understanding with the French. My voice and advice will, therefore, always be for discharging, with the utmost fidelity, gratitude, and exactness, every obligation we are under to France, and for cultivating her friendship and alliance by all sorts of good offices. But I am sure that, to do this effectually, we must reason with them at times, enter into particulars,

and be sure that we understand one another. We must act a manly, honest, independent, as well as a sensible part.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 13 July, 1783.

SIR, — Yesterday, Colonel Ogden arrived with the originals of what we had before received in duplicates by Captain Barney. The ratification of the Dutch treaty had been before received and exchanged. The ratification of their High Mightinesses is in the safe custody of M. Dumas, at present at the Hague.

I believe we shall accept of the mediation of the two Imperial Courts at the definitive treaty, as it is a mere formality, a mere compliment, consisting wholly in the imperial ministers putting their names and seals to the parchment, and can have no ill effect. The inclination of the Count de Vergennes seems to be, that we should accept it; and, as he calls upon us to decide in the affirmative or negative, I believe we shall give an answer in the affirmative.

The Empress has promised to receive Mr. Dana as soon as the definitive treaty shall be signed, and he has prepared a treaty of commerce which will be valuable, if he can obtain it.

The Emperor of Germany has caused to be intimated several ways his inclination to have a treaty of commerce with us; but his rank is so high, that his house never makes the first formal advance. I should think it advisable that we should have a treaty with that power for several reasons.

1st. Because, as Emperor of Germany, and King of Bohemia and Hungary, he is at the head of one of the greatest interests and most powerful connections in Europe. It is true it is the greatest weight in the scale, which is, and has been, from age to age, opposite to the house of Bourbon. But, for this very reason, if there were no other, the United States ought to have a treaty of commerce with it, in order to be in practice with their theory, and to show to all the world that their system of commerce embraces, equally and impartially, all the commercial states and countries of Europe.

2dly. Because the present Emperor is one of the greatest men of this age. The wisdom and virtue of the man, as well as of the monarch, his personal activity, intelligence, and accomplishments, his large and liberal principles in matters of religion, government, and commerce, are so much of kin to those of our States (perhaps, indeed, so much borrowed from them, and adopted in imitation of them), that it seems peculiarly proper we should show this respect to them.

3dly. Because, that if England should ever forget herself again so much as to attack us, she may not be likely to obtain the alliance or assistance of this power against us. A friendship once established in a treaty of commerce, this power would never be likely to violate, because she has no dominions near us, and could have no interest to quarrel with us.

4thly. Because the countries belonging to this power upon the Adriatic Sea and in the Austrian Flanders are no inconsiderable sources of commerce for America. And if the present negotiations between the two Imperial Courts and the Porte should terminate in a free navigation of the Danube, the Black Sea, and the Archipelago, the Emperor's hereditary dominions will become very respectable commercial countries.

5thly. Because, although we have at present a pleasant and joyful prospect of friendship and uninterrupted alliance with the house of Bourbon, which I wish may never be obscured, yet this friendship and alliance will be the more likely to continue unimpaired, for our having the friendship and commerce of the house of Austria. And (as in the vicissitudes of human affairs all things are possible) if, in future times, however unlikely at present, the house of Bourbon should deal unjustly by us, demand of us things we are not bound to perform, or any way injure us, we may find in the alliance of Austria, England, and Holland, a resource against the storm. Supernumerary strings to our bow, and provisions against possible inconveniences, however improbable, can do us no harm.

If we were not straitened for money, I should advise congress to send a minister to Vienna. But, as every mission abroad is a costly article, and we find it difficult at present to procure money for the most necessary purposes, I should think it proper for congress to send a commission to their minister at Versailles, London, Madrid, Petersburg, or the Hague, who might commu-

nicate it to the Court of Vienna by means of the imperial ambassador. The Emperor, in such a case, would authorize his ambassador at that Court to prepare and conclude a treaty, and in this way the business may be well done without any additional expense.

M. Favi, *Chargé des affaires* of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Emperor's brother, has called upon me so often to converse with me upon this subject, that I doubt not he has been employed, or at least knows that it would be agreeable to his Court and their connections, although he has never made any official insinuations about it. This gentleman has been employed by the Republic of Ragusa to consult American ministers upon the subject of commerce, too. I have told him that the American ports were open to the Ragusan vessels, as well as to all others, and have given him the address by which they propose to write to congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 14 July, 1783.

SIR, — A jealousy of American ships, seamen, carrying trade, and naval power, appears every day more and more conspicuous. This jealousy, which has been all along discovered by the French minister, is at length communicated to the English. The following proclamation,[1] which will not increase British

[1] *Proclamation at the Court of St. James, the 2d of July*, 1783.

Present, the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

"Whereas, by an act of parliament, passed this session, entitled an 'act for preventing certain instruments from being required from ships belonging to the United States of America, and to give his Majesty, for a limited time, certain powers for the better carrying on trade and commerce between the subjects of his Majesty's dominions and the inhabitants of the said United States;' it is amongst other things enacted, that, during the continuance of the said act, 'it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty in council, by order or orders to be issued and published from time to time, to give such directions, and to make such regulations, with respect to duties, drawbacks, or otherwise, for carrying on the trade and commerce between the people and territories belonging to the Crown of Great Britain and the people and territories of the said United States, as to his Majesty in council shall appear most expedient and salutary, any law, usage, or custom to the contrary notwithstanding;' his Majesty doth, therefore, by and with the advice of his privy council, hereby order and direct, that pitch,

ships and seamen in any proportion as it will diminish those of the United States, will contribute effectually to make America afraid of England and attach herself more closely to France. The English are the dupes, and must take the consequences.

This proclamation is issued in full confidence that the United States have no confidence in one another; that they cannot agree to act in a body as one nation; that they cannot agree upon any navigation act which may be common to the thirteen States. Our proper remedy would be, to confine our exports to American ships, to make a law that no article should be exported from any of the States in British ships, nor in the ships of any nation which will not allow us reciprocally to import their productions in our ships. I am much afraid there is too good an understanding upon this subject between Versailles and St. James's.

Perhaps it may be proper for congress to be silent upon this head, until New York, Penobscot, &c., are evacuated. But I should think that congress would never bind themselves by any treaty built upon such principles. They should negotiate, however, without loss of time, by a minister in London. A few weeks' delay may have unalterable effects.

One of the most remarkable things in this proclamation is the omission of salt fish, an article which the islands want as much as any that is enumerated. This is, no doubt, to encourage their own fishery and that of Nova Scotia, as well as a blow aimed at ours. There was, in a former proclamation con-

tar, turpentine, hemp, and flax; masts, yards, and bowsprits, staves, heading boards, timber, shingles, and all other species of lumber; horses, neat cattle sheep, hogs, poultry, and all other species of live stock and live provisions peas, beans, potatoes, wheat, flour, bread, biscuit, rice, oats, barley, and all other species of grain, being the growth or production of any one of the United States of America, may, until further order, be imported by British subjects, in British built ships, owned by his Majesty's subjects, and navigated according to law from any port of the United States of America to any of his Majesty's West India Islands; and that rum, sugar, molasses, coffee, cocoa-nuts, ginger, and pimento may, until further order, be exported by British subjects in British built ships, owned by his Majesty's subjects, and navigated according to law from any of his Majesty's West India Islands to any port or place within the said United States, upon payment of the same duties on exportation, and subject to the like rules, regulations, securities, and restrictions, as the same articles by law are, or may be, subject and liable to, if exported to any British colony or plantation in America. And the right honorable the lords commissioners of his Majesty's treasury, and the lords commissioners of the admiralty are to give the necessary directions herein, as to them may respectively appertain.'

STEPHEN COTTRELL."

cerning the trade between the United States and Great Britain, an omission of the articles of *potash* and *pearlash*. These omissions discover a *choice love* for New England. France, I am afraid, will exclude fish too, and imitate this proclamation but too closely; if, indeed, this proclamation is not an imitation of their system, adopted, as I believe it is, upon their advice and desire.

These, however, are important efforts. Without saying, writing, or resolving any thing suddenly, let us see what remedies or equivalents we can obtain from Holland, Portugal, and Denmark. Let us bind ourselves to nothing, but reserve a right of making navigation acts when we please, if we find them necessary or useful. If we had been defeated of our fisheries, we should have been wormed out of all our carrying trade, too, and should have been a mere society of cultivators, without any but a passive trade. The policy of France has succeeded, and laid, in these proclamations, if persisted in, the sure source of another war between us and Great Britain.

The English nation is not, however, unanimous in this new system, as congress will see by the inclosed speculations,[1] which I know to have been written by a confidential friend of my Lord Shelburne; I mean Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. This minister is very strong in the house of lords, and Mr. Pitt, in the house of commons, has attached to him many members in the course of this session. If that set should come in again, we shall have a chance of making an equitable treaty of commerce. To this end a minister must be ready; and I hope, in mercy to our country, that such an opportunity will not be lost by delays, in compliance to our allies.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 16 July, 1783.

SIR, — Yesterday we waited on the Count de Vergennes at Versailles, and showed him the project of a letter to the ministers of the two Imperial Courts, which he read and approved.

[1] This paper is missing.

We told him that we were at a loss what might be the effect of the mediation; possibly we might be involved in difficulties by it; possibly the British ministers might persuade the mediators to offer us their advice upon some points, respecting the royalists, for example, which we could not comply with. The Count said, that he had told them that as soon as he had fully agreed with England upon all points, their mediation should be accepted, and they should sign the treaty as such; and we might agree to it in the same manner. He said we were not obliged to this, but as they were to be present and sign one treaty, it would look better to sign both. It would be a very notorious, public, and respectable acknowledgment of us, as a power, by those Courts. Upon this footing we left the letter with him to be shown to the imperial ministers.

We asked the Count if he had seen the British proclamation of the 2d of July. He answered, that he had. I asked him, if the King had determined any thing on the subject of salt provisions and salt fish, whether we might import them into his islands. He said, we might depend upon it, they could not supply their islands with fish; that we had two free ports in their islands, — St. Lucia and a port in Martinique. By the thirty-second article of the treaty of commerce, these free ports are secured to us; nothing, he said, was determined concerning salt beef and pork, but the greatest difficulty would be about flour. I told the Count, that I did not think it would be possible either for France or England to carry on this commerce between the islands and continent; it was profitable to us only as it was a part of a system; that it could not be carried on without loss in large vessels, navigated by many seamen, which could sail only at certain seasons of the year, &c. Upon the whole, I was much pleased with this conversation, and conclude from it, that we shall do very well in the French West India Islands; perhaps the better in them, the worse we are treated by the English.

The Dutch and Danes will, I doubt not, avail themselves of every error that may be committed by France or England. It is good to have a variety of strings to our bow; and, therefore, I wish we had a treaty of commerce with Denmark, by which a free admission of our ships into their ports in the West Indies might be established. By means of the Dutch, Danes, and Per-

tuguese, I think we shall be able to obtain finally proper terms of France and England.

The British proclamation of the 2d of this month is the result of refugee politics; it is intended to encourage Canada and Nova Scotia and their fisheries, to support still the ruins of their navigation act, and to take from us the carriage even of our own productions. A system which has in it so little respect for us, and is so obviously calculated to give a blow to our nurseries of ships and seamen, could never have been adopted but from the opinion that we had no common legislature for the government of commerce.

All America, from the Chesapeake Bay to St. Croix, I know love ships and sailors; and those ports to the southward of that bay have advantages for obtaining them when they will; and, therefore, I hope the thirteen States will unite in some measures to counteract this policy of Britain, so evidently selfish, unsocial, and, I had almost said, hostile. The question is, what is to be done? I answer, perhaps it will be most prudent to say little about it at present, and until the definitive treaty is signed, and the States evacuated. But, after that, I think, in the negotiation of a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, congress should tell them that they have the means of doing justice to themselves. What are these means? I answer, let every State in the Union lay on a duty of five per cent. on all West India articles imported in British ships, and upon all their own productions exported in British ships. Let this impost be limited in duration, until Great Britain shall allow our vessels to trade to their West Indies. This would effectually defeat their plan, and encourage our own carrying trade more than they can discourage it.

Another way of influencing England to a reasonable conduct is, to take some measures for encouraging the growth in the United States of West India articles; another is to encourage manufactures, especially of wool and iron, among ourselves. As tilt-hammers are now not unlawful, and wool may be waterborne, much more may be done now than could have been done before the war. But the most certain method is, to lay duties on exports and imports by British ships. The sense of a common interest and a common danger, it is to be hoped, will induce a perfect unanimity among the States in this respect. There

are other ways of serving ourselves and making impressions upon the English to bring them to reason. One is, to send ships immediately to China. This trade is as open to us as to any nation, and if our natural advantages at home are envied us, we should compensate ourselves in any honest way we can.

Our natural share in the West India trade, is all that is now wanting to complete the plan of happiness and prosperity of our country. Deprived of it, we shall be straitened and shackled in some degree. We cannot enjoy a free use of all our limits without this; with it, I see nothing to desire, nothing to vex or chagrin our people, nothing to interrupt our repose or keep up a dread of war.

I know not what permission may be expected from Spain to trade to the Havana, but should think that this resource ought not to be neglected.

I confess I do not like the complexion of British politics. They are mysterious and unintelligible. Mr. Hartley appears not to be in the secret of his Court. The things which happen appear as unexpected to him as to us. Political jealousies and speculations are endless. It is possible the British ministers may be secretly employed in fomenting the quarrel between the two Imperial Courts and the Porte, and in secretly stirring up the French to join the Turks in the war. The prospect of seeing France engaged in a war, may embolden them to adopt a system less favorable to us. The possibility of these things should stimulate us, I think, to form, as soon as possible, treaties of commerce with the principal powers, especially the Imperial Courts, that all our questions may be decided. This will be a great advantage to us, even if we should afterwards be involved in a war. I put this supposition with great reluctance. But, if England should, in the course of a few years or months, have the art to stir up a general war in Europe, and get France and Spain seriously involved in it, which is at least a possible case, she may assume a tone and conduct towards us which will make it very difficult for us to avoid taking a part in it. If such a deplorable circumstance should take place, it will be still a great advantage to us, to have our sovereignty explicitly acknowledged by those powers against whom we may be unfortunately obliged to act. At present, they are all disposed to it, and seem desirous of forming connections with us, that we may be out of the question.

The politics of Europe are such a labyrinth of profound mysteries, that the more one sees of them, the more causes of uncertainty and anxiety he discovers.

The United States will have occasion to brace up their confederation, and act as one body with one spirit. If they do not, it is now very obvious that Great Britain will take advantage of it in such a manner as will endanger our peace, our safety, and even our very existence. A change of ministry may, but it is not certain that it will, give us better prospects.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 17 July, 1783.

SIR, — Last evening Mr. Hartley spent two hours with me, and appeared much chagrined at the proclamation, which had never been communicated to him by his principals. He has too much contempt of the commercial abilities of the French, and consequently said that the French could derive but little benefit from this step of his Court; but he thought the Dutch would make a great advantage by it. I endeavored to discover from him, whether he suspected that his Court had any hand in stirring up the two Imperial Courts to make war upon the Turks. I asked him, what was the state of their Mediterranean trade and Levant trade. He said, it was dead, and that their Turkey company was dead, and, therefore, he did not think his Court cared much about either, or would ever do any thing to prevent the Empires. He thought it possible that they might rather encourage them.

I am quite of Mr. Hartley's mind, that the Dutch will profit by all the English blunders in regulating the West India trade, and am happy that M. Van Berckel will be soon with congress, when its members and ministers may communicate through him any thing they wish to their High Mightinesses. They may inquire of him, What are the rights of the East and West India Companies? To what an extent our vessels may be admitted to Surinam, Curaçoa, Demerara, Essequibo, Berbice, St. Eustatia? What we may be allowed to carry there? and what bring

from thence to the United States or to Europe? Whether we may carry sugars, &c., to Amsterdam, Rotterdam, &c.? There are at Rotterdam and Amsterdam one hundred and twenty-seven or eight refineries of sugar. How far these may be affected, &c.?

I lay it down for a rule, that the nation which shall allow us the most perfect liberty to trade with her Colonies, whether it be France, England, Spain, or Holland, will see her Colonies flourish above all others, and will draw proportionally our trade to themselves; and, I rely upon it, the Dutch will have sagacity to see it; and as they are more attentive to mercantile profit than to a military marine, I have great hopes from their friendship. As there will be an interval before the signature of the definitive treaty, I propose a journey of three weeks to Amsterdam and the Hague, in hopes of learning in more detail the intentions of the Dutch in this respect. I am in hopes, too, of encouraging the loan, to assist our superintendent of finance. The Dutch may be a great resource to us in finance and commerce. I wish that cargoes of produce may be hastened to Amsterdam, to Messrs. Willink & Co., for this will give vigor to the loan, and all the money we can prevent England and the two empires from obtaining in Holland, will not only be nerves for us, but, perhaps, be useful too to France in her negotiations.

I have spent the whole forenoon in conversation with the Duc de la Vauguyon. He thinks that England wishes to revive her trade to the Levant, to Smyrna, Aleppo, &c., and her carrying trade in Italy; and although she might be pleased to see France involved in a war with the Emperor and Empress, yet he thinks her funds are not in a condition to afford subsidies to either, and, therefore, that she will be perfectly neutral. Quære, however, whether, if by a subsidy or a loan of a million or two a year, she could make France spend eight or ten millions, she would not strive hard to do it? The Duke thinks that France will proceed softly, and endeavor, if possible, to avert the furious storm that threatens, and to compose the disputes of the three empires, if possible; but she will never suffer such a usurpation as the conquest of the Turkish Provinces in Europe. France will certainly defend Constantinople. He thinks, that the Empress of Russia has not revenues, and cannot get cash to march and subsist vast armies, and to transport great fleets, and that the Emperor has not revenues to support a long war.

This is, however, a serious business, and France lays it so much to heart, and looks upon the chance of her being obliged to arm, as so probable, that I presume this to be the principal motive of her refusal to lend us two or three millions of livres more.

As to our West India questions, the Duke assures me that the French ministry, particularly the Count de Vergennes, are determined to do every thing they can consistent with their own essential interests, to favor and promote the friendship and commerce between their country and ours. That they, especially the Count, are declared enemies of the French fiscal system, which is certainly the most ruinous to their commerce, and intend to do every thing they can to make alterations to favor commerce; but no change can be made in this, without affecting their revenues, and making voids, failures, and deficiencies which they cannot fill up. They must, therefore, proceed softly. That France would favor the commerce between Portugal and America, because it would tend to draw off that kingdom from her dependence on England. That England, by her commercial treaty with the Portuguese, in 1703, has turned them into an English Colony, made them entirely dependent, and secured a commerce with them of three millions value. France would be glad to see this, or as much of it as possible, turned to America.

The Duke agrees fully with me in the maxim, that those colonies will grow the most in wealth, improvement, population, and every sort of prosperity, which are allowed the freest communication with us, and that we shall be allowed to carry lumber, fish, and live stock to their islands; but that the export of their sugars to us, he thinks, must be in their own ships, because they are afraid of our becoming the carriers of all their commerce, because they know and say that we can do it cheaper than they can. These sentiments are different from those which he mentioned to me a few days ago, when he said the West India trade with us must be carried on in French bottoms.

The Duke said, the English had been trying to deceive us, but were now developing their true sentiments. They pretended for a while to abolish the navigation act and all distinctions, to make one people with us again, to be friends, brothers, &c., in hopes of drawing us off from France, but not finding

success, they were now showing their true plan. As to the pretended system of Shelburne, of a universal, free commerce, although he thought it would be for the good of mankind in general, yet, for an English minister, it was the plan of a madman, for it would be the ruin of that nation. He did not think Shelburne was sincere in it; he only meant an illusion to us. Here I differ from the Duke, and believe that the late ministry were very sincere towards us, and would have made a treaty with us, at least to revive the universal trade between us upon a liberal plan. This doctrine of ruin, from that plan, to the English, has been so much preached of late in England by the French and the American refugees, who aim at establishments in Canada and Nova Scotia, and by the old Butean administration and their partisans, that I do not know whether any ministry could now support a generous plan. But if Temple, Thurlow, Shelburne, Pitt, &c., should come in, I should not despair of it. It is true, the Shelburne administration did encourage the ideas of cordial, perfect friendship, of entire reconciliation of affections, of making no distinction between their people and ours, especially between the inhabitants of Canada and Nova Scotia and us, and this, with the professed purpose of destroying all seeds of war between us. These sentiments were freely uttered by Fitzherbert, Oswald, Whitefoord, Vaughan, and all who had the confidence of that ministry; and in these sentiments they were, I believe, very sincere. And they are, indeed, the only means of preventing a future war between us and them; and so sure as they depart from that plan, so sure, in less than fifteen years, perhaps less than seven, there will break out another war. Quarrels will arise among fishermen, between inhabitants of Canada and Nova Scotia and us, and between their people and ours in the West Indies, in our ports, and in the ports of the three kingdoms, which will breed a war in spite of all we can do to prevent it. France sees this and rejoices in it, and I know not whether we ought to be sorry; yet I think we ought to make it a maxim to avoid all wars, if possible, and to take care that it is not our fault, if we cannot. We ought to do every thing which the English will concur in, to remove all causes of jealousies, and kill all the seeds of hostility, as effectually as we can; and to be upon our guard to prevent the French, Spaniards, and Dutch, from sow-

ing the seeds of war between us; for, we may rely upon it, they will do it, if they can.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 18 July, 1783.

SIR, — There is cause to be solicitous about the state of things in England. The present ministry swerve more and more from the true system, for the prosperity of their country and ours. Mr. Hartley, whose sentiments are at bottom just, is probably kept here, if he was not sent at first, merely to amuse us, and to keep him out of the way of embarrassing the coalition. We need not fear that France and England will make a common cause against us, even in relation to the carrying trade to and from the West Indies. Although they may mutually inspire into each other false notions of their interests, at times, yet there can never be a concert of operations between them. Mutual enmity is bred in the blood and bones of both, and rivals and enemies at heart they eternally will be.

In order to induce both to allow us our natural right to the carrying trade, we must negotiate with the Dutch, Danes, Portuguese, and even with the empires; for the more friends and resources we have, the more we shall be respected by the French and English; and the more freedom of trade we enjoy with the Dutch possessions in America, the more will France and England find themselves necessitated to allow us.

The present ministers in England have very bad advisers; the refugees, and emissaries of various other sorts; and we have nobody to watch, to counteract, to correct or prevent any thing. The United States will soon see the necessity of uniting in measures to counteract their enemies, and even their friends. What powers congress should have for governing the trade of the whole, for making or recommending prohibitions or imposts, deserves the serious consideration of every man in America. If a constitutional, legislative authority cannot be given them, a sense of common danger and necessity should give to their recommendations all the force upon the minds of the people which they had six years ago.

If the union of the States is not preserved, and even their unity, in many great points, instead of being the happiest people under the sun, I do not know but we may be the most miserable. We shall find our foreign affairs the most difficult to manage of any of our interests; we shall see and feel them disturbed by invisible agents and causes, by secret intrigues, by dark and mysterious insinuations, by concealed corruptions of a thousand sorts. Hypocrisy and simulation will assume a million of shapes; we shall feel the evil, without being able to prove the cause. Those whose penetration reaches the true source of the evil will be called suspicious, envious, disappointed, ambitious. In short, if there is not an authority sufficiently decisive to draw together the minds, affections, and forces of the States, in their common, foreign concerns, it appears to me, we shall be the sport of transatlantic politicians of all denominations, who hate liberty in every shape, and every man who loves it, and every country that enjoys it. If there is no common authority, nor any common sense to secure a revenue for the discharge of our engagements abroad for money, what is to become of our honor, our justice, our faith, our universal moral, political, and commercial character? If there is no common power to fulfil engagements with our citizens, to pay our soldiers and other creditors, can we have any moral character at home? Our country will become the region of everlasting discontents, reproaches, and animosities, and instead of finding our independence a blessing, we shall soon become Cappadocians enough to wish it done away.

I may be thought gloomy, but this ought not to discourage me from laying before congress my apprehensions. The dependence of those who have designs upon us, upon our want of affection to each other, and of authority over one another, is so great, that, in my opinion, if the United States do not soon show to the world a proof that they can command a common revenue, to satisfy their creditors at home and abroad that they can act as one people, as one nation, as one man, in their transactions with foreign nations, we shall be soon so far despised, that it will be but a few years, perhaps but a few months only, before we are involved in another war.

What can I say in Holland, if a doubt is started, whether we can repay the money we wish to borrow? I must assure them,

in a tone that will exclude all doubt, that the money will be repaid. Am I to be hereafter reproached with deceiving the money-lenders? I cannot believe there is a man in America who would not disdain the supposition, and, therefore, I shall not scruple to give the strongest assurances in my power. But, if there is a doubt in congress, they ought to recall their borrowers of money.

I shall set off to-morrow for Holland, in hopes of improving my health, at the same time that I shall endeavor to assist the loan, and to turn the speculations of the Dutch merchants, capitalists, and statesmen towards America. It is of vast importance that the Dutch should form just ideas of their interests, respecting the communication between us and their islands and other colonies in America. I beg that no time may be lost in commencing conferences with M. Van Berckel upon this subject, as well as that of money; but this should not be communicated to the French nor the English, because, we may depend upon it, both will endeavor to persuade the Dutch to adopt the same plan with themselves. There are jealousies on both sides the *pas de Calais*, of our connections and negotiations with the Dutch. But while we avoid as much as we can to inflame this jealousy, we must have sense, and firmness and independence enough not to be intimidated by it from availing ourselves of advantages that Providence has placed in our power. There ever have been, and ever will be, suspicions of every honest, active, and intelligent American, and there will be, as there have been, insidious attempts to destroy or lessen your confidence in every such character. But, if our country does not support her own interests and her own servants, she will assuredly fall. Persons who study to preserve or obtain the confidence of America by the favor of European statesmen or courts, must betray their country to preserve their places.

For my own part, I wish Mr. Jay and myself almost anywhere else but here. There is scarce any other place where we might not do some good. Here, we are in a state of annihilation.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 23 July, 1783.

Sir, — On Saturday last I left Paris, and arrived here last night. This morning I sent M. Dumas to M. Van Berckel and M. Gyselaer, to inform them of my arrival, and to desire a conversation with them upon the subject of the commerce between the United States and the Dutch establishments in the West Indies.

M. Van Berckel told M. Dumas, "that St. Eustatia and Curaçao were open to the vessels of all nations and to the commerce of all the world; but that it was not the interest of the West India Company alone, but that of the whole State, that obliged them to confine the commerce of their sugars to themselves, because of the great number of their refineries of sugar. That all their own sugars were not half enough to employ their sugar-houses, and that at least one half of the sugars refined in Holland were the production of the French West India Islands."

I suppose that some of these sugars may have been carried first to St. Eustatia, and brought from thence to Holland, and some others may have been purchased in the ports of France, and imported raw from thence. I do not know that Dutch vessels are permitted to purchase sugars in the French islands, and export them from thence. This matter deserves to be examined to the bottom. If France has not sugar-houses for the refinement of her own sugars, but is obliged to carry them, or to permit their being carried, to Amsterdam and Rotterdam for manufacture, why should she not be willing that the same sugars should be carried by Americans to Boston, New York, and Philadelphia? Surely France has no predilection for Holland rather than America. But, what is of more weight, all the sugars which America takes, will be paid for in articles more advantageous to the islands and to France than the pay that is made by the Dutch. If any sugars refined in Holland are afterwards sold in France, surely it would be more for the interest of France, or rather less against her interests, to have the same sugars refined in America, and afterwards sold in France, because the price of them would be laid out by us in France.

There is this difference between us and the Dutch and all other nations, — we spend in Europe all the profits we make, and more; the others do not. But if the French sugars, refined in Holland, are afterwards sold in other parts of Europe, it would be just as well that we should sell them. We have sugar-houses as well as the Dutch, and ours ought not to be more obnoxious to French policy or commerce than theirs.

Sugars are a great article. There is a great consumption in America. It is not the interest of any nation that has sugars to sell, to lessen the consumption there. All such nations should favor that consumption, in order to multiply purchasers and quicken the competition, by which the price is raised. None of these nations, then, will wish to prevent our having sugar, provided we offer as high, or a higher price. How they will be able to arrange their plans, so that we may have enough for our own consumption, without having more, without having some for exportation, I do not know.

We have now St. Eustatia and Curaçao, St. Lucia and Martinique, St. Thomas and St. Martin's, no less than six free ports in the West Indies; and perhaps England may be induced, necessitated indeed, to add two more to the number, and make eight. At these free ports it will be hard if we cannot find sugars, when we carry thither all our own productions in our own ships. And, if the worst should happen, and all the nations who have sugar islands should forbid sugars to be carried to America in any other than their own bottoms, we might depend upon having enough of this article at the free ports, to be brought away in our own ships, if we should lay a prohibition or a duty upon it in foreign ships. To do either, the States must be united, which the English think cannot be. Perhaps the French think so, too, and, in time, they may persuade the Dutch to be of the same opinion. It is to be hoped we shall disappoint them all. In a point so just and reasonable, when we are contending only for an equal chance for the carriage of our own productions and the articles of our own consumption, when we are willing to allow to all other nations even a free competition with us in this carriage, if we cannot unite, it will discover an imperfection and weakness in our constitution which will deserve a serious consideration.

M. Visscher, Pensionary of Amsterdam, who came in to visit

me, when I had written thus far, showed me a list of the directors of the West India Company, and referred me to M. Bicker, of Amsterdam, as one of the most intelligent of them. He says, that the colonists of Surinam, Berbice, Essequibo, and Demerara have been in decay, and obliged to borrow money of the merchants at home, and have entered into contracts with those merchants to send them annually all the productions of their plantations, to pay the interest and principal of their debts; that this will make it difficult to open the trade.

Soon after M. Visscher went out, M. Van Berckel came in. I entered into a like conversation with him, and told him, that I thought the decay of their plantations in the West Indies had been owing to the rivalry of other nations, especially the English, whose islands had greater advantages, from a freer communication with North America; and I thought it might be laid down as a rule, that those islands would flourish most in population, culture, commerce, and wealth, which had the freest intercourse with us, and that this intercourse would be a natural means of attracting the American commerce to the metropolis. He thought so too.

I then mentioned to him the loan; and asked him, if he thought that the states-general, the States of Holland, or the regency of Amsterdam would be likely in any way to aid us? He said, no; that the country was still so much divided, that he could not depend upon any assistance in that way; that the council of Amsterdam was well enough disposed, but that the burgomasters were not so; that M. Temminck, M. Huygens, and M. Rendorp were not to be depended on in such an affair; that, therefore, our only resource was, to endeavor to gain upon the public opinion and the spirit of the nation, and that, in this respect, he would do me all the service in his power. He thought that the present uncertainty about the definitive treaty and the fate of the Republic would be an obstacle; but, the definitive treaty once signed, he thought our loan would succeed very well. I asked him, whether he thought that the junction of three houses in my loan was any obstruction to it? and whether any one of them, or whether any other house would do better? I told him what his brother (now I hope in Philadelphia) had said to M. Dumas, namely, — that the house of Wilhem and Jan Willink alone would succeed sooner than the three. I

asked him, whether he thought the house of Hope, either alone, or in conjunction with that of the Willinks or any other, would undertake it. He said, this might well be, and that if they saw their interest in it they would, for those mercantile houses had no other object in view. He promised me to make inquiry into this matter, and let me know the result.

Upon this occasion, I must inform congress that it is absolutely necessary they should send another minister to this republic, without loss of time; because our three present houses, before they would undertake the loan, extorted a promise from me not to open another with any other house until the five millions should be full. This engagement I took for myself alone, however, and expressly premised that congress should not be bound by it, that congress should be perfectly free, and that any other minister they might send here should be perfectly free to open another loan, when and with whom they pleased. A new minister, therefore, may open a loan when he will, with Hope, Willink, or whom he will, and I am persuaded it would succeed to a good amount.

I made visits to-day, the 25th of July, to the grand pensionary, the Secretary Fagel, the president of the week, and M. Gyselaer; and returned visits to M. Van Berckel and M. Visscher. M. Gyselaer says, that at present there is no ready money (*argent comptant*) in the Republic, but in two months there will be, and the loan will go very well.

At noon I went to the house in the Grove, to make my court to the Prince and Princess of Orange.

The Prince either happened to be in a social humor, or has had some political speculations lately, for he thought fit to be uncommonly gracious and agreeable. He made me sit, and sat down by me, and entered into familiar conversation about the negotiations of peace. He asked many questions about it, and the probability of a speedy conclusion of the definitive treaty. At length he asked me, if Dr. Franklin was left alone. I answered, that Mr. Jay was with him. He asked, if I returned before the signature. I answered, that such was my intention. He asked, whether Dr. Franklin was an ambassador. I answered, that he was a minister plenipotentiary only. He asked, if none of us were ambassadors. I answered, that we all had the same rank of ministers plenipotentiary, and that congress

had never yet made an ambassador. He said, he was astonished at that; that he had a long time expected to hear that we had displayed the character of ambassadors. I asked his Highness what reason he had for this, and what advantage there was in it. "Why," said he, "I expected that your Republic would early assert her right to appoint ambassadors. Republics have been generally fond of appointing ambassadors, in order to be upon a footing with crowned heads. Our Republic began very early. We had eight ambassadors at the peace of Munster, one for each province, and one supernumerary. And we always choose to appoint ambassadors, for the sake of being upon an equality with crowned heads. There are only crowned heads, republics, and the electors of the empire, who have a right to send ambassadors; all others can only send envoys and ministers plenipotentiary. Princes cannot send ambassadors. I cannot, as stadtholder, nor as prince, nor in any other quality, send a minister of any higher order than an envoy or minister plenipotentiary." He asked me, what was the reason the congress had not made use of their right. I answered his Highness, that really I did not know. It was a subject I had never much reflected on. Perhaps congress had not; or they might think it a matter of ceremony and of show, rather than substance; or might think the expense greater than the advantage. He said, it was very true the dignity of the rank must be supported; but he thought the advantage worth more than the expense.

I am utterly at a loss for his Highness's motives for entering so minutely into this subject. Whether M. Van Berckel, before his departure, had mentioned it; whether he thought he should please me by it; whether he thought to please congress by it; whether he affected to interest himself in the honor of the United States; or whether any of the politicians of this or any other country have put him upon it, or whether it is mere accident, I know not. They are the words of a prince, and I have reported them very exactly.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 25 July, 1783.

Sir, — It is the general opinion here, both among the members of the States and at the *Hôtel de France*, that the delays of the definitive pacification are contrived by the Court of London, in order to set all their instruments at work in this Republic, to induce it to renew its ancient connections with Great Britain, particularly their alliance offensive and defensive, by which each power was bound to furnish the other, if attacked, a certain number of ships and troops. Against this the patriotic party is decided, and they are now very well satisfied with the grand pensionary, Bleiswyck, because he openly and roundly takes their side; and the Court is said to be discontented with him for the same reason. There is, no doubt, an intelligence and correspondence between the two Courts of London and the Hague to bring about this point. The grand pensionary told me yesterday that the Court of London desired it, and there were persons here who desired it, and he knew very well who they were; but that most certainly they would not carry their point. Van Berckel, Visscher, and Gyselaer all assured me of the same, and added, that the fear of this had determined them not to send a minister to London, but to go through with the negotiation at Paris, although they were all highly dissatisfied with the conduct of France, and particularly with that of the Count de Vergennes.

They all say he has betrayed and deserted them, played them a very bad trick (*tour*), and violated his repeated promises to them. They do not in the least spare M. Berenger and M. Merchant, who conduct the French affairs here in the absence of the Duc de la Vauguyon, but hold this language openly and freely to them. These gentlemen have sometimes found it hard to bear, and have winced, and sometimes even threatened; but their answer has been more mortifying still: "Do as you please. Drive the Republic back into the arms of England, if you will. Suppress all the friends of France, if you choose it." And some of them have said, "we will go to America." They all say that France had the power to have saved them; that the acquisition of Tobago was no equivalent to France for the loss

of the Republic, &c., &c., &c. They are all highly pleased with the conduct of their own ambassador, Brantzen, with his activity, intelligence, and fidelity. They all say that they would send a minister to London to negotiate there, if they were sure of being able to carry an election for a man they could depend upon. But the Court here would have so much influence in the choice, that they would run a risk of sending a man who would insensibly lead them into a revival of the old ties with England, which, they say, is enslaving the Republic to that kingdom.

I learn here, from all quarters, a confirmation of what I had learned before at Paris from M. Brantzen and the Duc de la Vauguyon, namely, — that the Duke of Manchester had given them no answer, nor said a word to them for six weeks, in answer to the propositions they had made; among which was an offer of an equivalent for Negapatnam. They offered some establishments in Sumatra and Surat. Lately, the Duke of Manchester has received a courier, and has given an answer, that a real equivalent might be accepted. No answer is given to any other point, and this is vague; so that another courier must go to London and return. Parliament is now up, and perhaps the ministers may now be more attentive and less timorous. I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Amsterdam, 28 July, 1783.

Sir, — I find, upon inquiry, that there are in this Republic, at Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dort, near one hundred and thirty sugar-houses. The whole of the raw sugars produced in Surinam, Berbice, Essequibo, and Demerara, are wrought in these houses; and, besides, raw sugars were purchased in Bordeaux and Nantes, after being imported from the French islands in French bottoms. Raw sugars were also purchased in London, which went under the general name of Barbadoes sugars, although they were the growth of all the English islands, and imported to London in British bottoms. I have learnt further, that great quantities of raw Brazil sugars were purchased in Lisbon, and that these were cheaper than any of the others. All these raw sugars were imported into Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dort,

and there manufactured for exportation. We must endeavor to obtain a share in this trade, especially with Lisbon or the Western Islands.

Since it is certain that neither Portugal, France, nor England, has been able to manufacture all its raw sugars, but each of them sold considerable quantities to the Dutch, I suppose that we may undoubtedly purchase such sugars in future in Lisbon, Bordeaux, Nantes, London, and perhaps Ireland, and carry them where we please, either home to America, or to Amsterdam, or to any part of Europe, and there sell them, and in this way promote our own carrying trade, as well as enable ourselves to make remittances. I cannot see why the English or French should be averse to their sugars going to America directly; and if they insist upon carrying them in their own ships, we may still have enough of them. The Dutch have the most pressing commercial motives to bring home their West India produce; yet they would really gain the most by opening a free communication with us, because they would the most suddenly make their colonies flourish by it.

Molasses and rum we shall have, probably, from all the islands, — English, French, and Dutch, — in our own bottoms, unless the three nations should agree together to keep the whole trade of their islands in their own ships, which is not likely.

I have made all the inquiries I could, and have sown all the seeds I could, in order to give a spur to our loan. Three thousand obligations have been sold, and the other two thousand are signed; but at this time there is a greater scarcity of money than ever was known. The scarcity is so great, that the agio of the bank, which is commonly at four or five per cent., fell to one and a half. The directors at length shut up the bank, and it continues shut. The English omnium, which at first was sold for eight or ten per cent. profit, fell to one and a half. The scarcity of money will continue until the arrival of the Spanish flotilla at Cadiz. Seven eighths of the treasures of that flotilla will come here, and make money plenty. Then we may expect that my obligations will sell.

In the mean time, I have great pleasure in assuring you, that there is not one foreign loan open in this Republic which is in so good credit, or goes so quick as mine. The Empress of Russia opened a loan of five millions about the same time that I

opened mine. She is far from having obtained three millions of it. Spain opened a loan with the house of Hope at the same time for two millions only, and, you may depend upon it, it is very far from being full. Not one quarter part of the loan of France upon life-rents, advantageous as it is to the lender, is full. In short, there is not one power in Europe whose credit is so good here as ours. Russia and Spain, too, allow of facilities to undertakers and others, in disposing of their obligations, much more considerable than ours; yet all does not succeed. You will see persons and letters in America that will affirm that the Spanish loan is full, and that France and Spain can have what money they please here. Believe me, this is all stockjobbing gasconade. I have made very particular inquiries, and find the foregoing account to be the truth. Of all the sons of men, I believe the stockjobbers are the greatest liars. I know it has been given out that the Spanish loan which was opened at Hope's was full the first day. This I know has been affirmed in the hearing of Americans, with a confidence peculiar, and with a design, I suppose, that it should be written or reported to congress. But I am now assured that it is so far from being true, that it is not near full to this hour. Let me beg of you, sir, to give Mr. Morris an extract of this, because I am so pressed for time that I cannot write to him.

Upon further inquiry concerning sugars, I find that the Dutch were used to purchase annually considerable quantities of the raw sugars of Spain, as well as of France, England, and Portugal. Some of these they obtained by a clandestine trade between Curaçao and Havana and St. Domingo; but the greater part were purchased at Cadiz. I suppose our merchants and masters of vessels will be as adroit at inventing and executing projects of illicit trade as others. But this is a resource that congress and the States cannot depend on, nor take into their calculations. Illicit trade will ever bear but a small proportion to that which is permitted. And our governments should take their measures for obtaining, by legal and honorable means, from Spain, Portugal, France, England, Holland, and Denmark, all the productions which our people may want for consumption, for manufacture, and for exportation. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Amsterdam, 28 July, 1783.

Sir, — Upon inquiry of those who best know, I see no probability of success from any application to authority in this country, for reasons which I have explained to our minister of foreign affairs. Our only resource is in the public opinion and the favor of the nation.

I know of nothing which would operate so favorably upon the public as the arrival of a few vessels with cargoes of American produce, addressed to your bankers, and appropriated to the payment of interest. The report of such an event would greatly augment our credit, by spreading the opinion of our ability and disposition to pay.

It would be presumption in me, at this distance, to undertake to advise you, who are upon the spot, and much better informed. But I beg leave to suggest the question, whether an application of congress to the States would not succeed. Suppose congress should represent to the States the necessity of an exertion, in order to obtain a loan at present, to enable you to satisfy the most urgent demands of the army and other public creditors, until the States can agree upon some permanent establishment, and should recommend to each State to furnish a cargo of its produce, in proportion to its rate upon the list. For example, South Carolina and Georgia a quantity of rice or indigo; Virginia and Maryland, of tobacco; Pennsylvania, of wheat or flour; and the northern States, of fish or any other thing. Suppose these cargoes, which need not be expensive for the thirteen States, should be sent to Amsterdam or anywhere else in Europe, the proceeds of sale to be remitted to Amsterdam to your bankers. The reputation of this, if well planned, adopted, and executed, would give a strong impulsion to your loan here.

I am but just arrived, and have not yet seen our bankers. Saturday and Sunday are usually spent at country seats. But before I leave this place, I shall be able to inform you more precisely, whether you may depend on any thing from hence. No pains of mine shall be spared. The British stocks are so low, that we may hope for something. If a minister is sent to London, you should give him a commission to borrow money. If

he conducts the matter with secrecy and caution, he may probably obtain a considerable sum there. There are moneyed men in that country who wish us well. There are others who may easily be inspired with more faith in our funds than they can rationally have in their own. If, upon advising with proper persons, he should not judge it prudent to open a loan there, he might easily put things in a train for some individuals to purchase obligations in your loan in Amsterdam. So dismal are the prospects in England, that many men are on the wing to fly, and some would be willing to transfer their property across the Atlantic. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

FRANCIS DANA TO JOHN ADAMS.

St. Petersburg, 29 July, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR, — 'Tis done. The bolt of your Vulcan has hit its aim. The idea you mentioned to me some time since, relative to the use of the credit I had asked for, and which in reply I told you was not new to me, that the same had been repeatedly thrown out here by persons, whom to suspect of sinister or interested views would be deemed by some a most damnable, political heresy, has crossed the Atlantic, and gotten possession of congress. I am told, they will not *buy* a treaty at this day. But pray remark what I have said in my letter to you of the 21st of last May, relative to this subject, particularly in the last paragraph of it, beginning thus, — "Besides, I should not be surprised."[1] You may turn also to my letter of the 26th of the same month. But, contemptible beyond all contempt (pardon the expression) is the construction upon my instructions. Would it not put a pettifogger out of countenance to be detected in such a miserable thing? Pray, my friend, are you sufficiently versed in the diplomatic science to develop the whole meaning of the term "*communicate*," and of the double *&c.?* These, Lord Coke observes, are very pregnant oftentimes. And that gentleman has read Lord Coke, and must, therefore, be an excellent commentator. But, lest he should

[1] See page 65.

not have read the text through, when he made his comment, I have laid it out at its full length before him. He may now comment upon it at leisure. I have thought it too plain to need any of mine.

Do not imagine, my friend, that I am angry, shall I say, at this Dutch commentator. No. I have other feelings respecting him and our much abused country. I recollect the cause of the instruction we received, relative to the fishery, at our departure. I recollect the fatal revocation of your power to conclude a commercial treaty with Great Britain. I call it fatal, because, if I am not deceived, we have lost forever the most important advantages of a free commerce with the British West Indies by that measure. We might have obtained every thing at the conclusion of our preliminary treaty, if our commissioners had had that power. This is evident from the bill of Mr. Pitt, the chancellor of the exchequer. This last stroke, I think, tops the system. A more favorable moment for negotiating a commercial treaty here, will, in all probability, never happen. The present views of Great Britain give us many advantages to draw forth convenient concessions. Can Russia see, with indifference, Great Britain holding out special favors for the encouragement of our naval stores? But I need not enter into particulars with you on these subjects, who have surveyed them on all sides. I send you inclosed my letter to Mr. Livingston.

I have several times acquainted congress of my wish and intention to return to America as soon as I had concluded a commercial treaty with her Imperial Majesty. In consequence of this, they have, by resolution, approved of my returning, "provided I should not be engaged in a negotiation with this Court at the time of receiving the resolution, in which case it is the desire of congress, that I should finish such negotiation before I return." I am not engaged in any, as I have not yet had my audience; and to *communicate*, but not to *sign*, is beyond my comprehension, and, I believe, would surpass theirs also.[1] If I should break through this cobweb, I should find myself stopped short by the other matter, which is essential.

[1] To understand the allusions in this letter, it will be necessary to recur to Secretary Livingston's despatch to Mr. Dana, dated 1 May, 1783, in the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Revolution*, vol. viii. p. 437.

What is to be done in such circumstances? I answer, the wisest part it appears to me is to get out of them as soon as possible. But for this last difficulty, I would demand my audience as soon as the definitive treaty is concluded, enter immediately upon the negotiation of a treaty of commerce, and, maugre all comments, sign, ah, and seal, too, "the form and terms of a treaty" I should agree upon with her Majesty's ministers. As it is, I say to myself, begone. I will be gone. And God grant, I may soon have the pleasure of meeting you in our country, and all friends well. Yours, &c.

Francis Dana.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 31 July, 1783.

Sir, — The last evening, at Court in the house in the Grove, where all the foreign ministers supped, the Count Montagnini de Mirabel, the minister plenipotentiary from the King of Sardinia, took an opportunity to enter largely into conversation with me. As he and I were at a party of politics, while the greatest part of the company were at cards, for two or three hours, we ran over all the world; but nothing occurred worth repeating, except what follows.

The Count said, that his advice to congress would be, to write a circular letter to every power in Europe, as soon as the definitive treaty should be signed, and transmit with it a printed copy of the treaty. In the letter, congress should announce, that on the 4th of July, 1776, the United States had declared themselves a sovereign State, under the style and title of the United States of America; that France, on the 6th of February, 1778, had acknowledged them; that the states-general had done the same on the 10th of April, 1782; that Great Britain, on the 30th of November, 1782, had signed with them a treaty of peace, in which she had fully acknowledged their sovereignty; that Sweden had entered into a treaty with them on the 5th of February, 1783; and that Great Britain had concluded the definitive treaty under the mediation of the two empires, if that should be the fact, &c. Such a notification to all the other powers would be a regular procedure, a piece of politeness which would be very well received, and the letter would be

respectfully answered by every power in the world, and these written answers would be explicit and undeniable acknowledgments of our sovereignty. It might have been proper to make this communication in form, immediately after the declaration of independence; it might have been more proper to do it after the signature of the provisional treaty; but that it was expected it would be done after the definitive treaty; that these circular letters might be transmitted to your ministers for peace, or such of them as may remain, or to any of your ministers in Europe, to be by them delivered to the ministers at the Court where they are, or transmitted any other way; that congress must be very exact in the etiquette of titles, as this was indispensable, and the letters could not be answered nor received without it; that we might have these titles at the Count de Vergennes's office with precision, &c.

The Count then proceeded to commerce, and said, that all the cabinets of Europe had lately turned their views to commerce, so that we should be attended to and respected by all of them. He thought we should find our account in a large trade in Italy, every part of which had a constant demand for our tobacco and salt fish at least. The dominions of the King, his master, could furnish us in exchange, oranges, citrons, olives, oil, raisins, figs, anchovies, coral, lead, sulphur, alum, salt, marble of the finest quality and gayest colors, manufactures of silk, especially silk stockings twenty per cent. cheaper than France, hemp, and cordage. He said, we might have great advantages in Italy in another respect. We had it in our power to become the principal carriers for the people of Italy, who have little skill or inclination for navigation or commerce. The (*cabotage*) carrying trade of Italy had been carried on by the English, French, and Dutch; the English had now lost it, the French had some of it, but the Dutch the most, who made an immense profit of it; for, to his knowledge, they sold in the Baltic, and even in Holland, many Italian productions at a profit of five or six for one; that we should have the advantage of them all. By bringing our tobacco and fish to Italy, we might unload at some of their ports, take in cargoes upon freight for other ports of Italy, and thus make coasting voyages, until we had made up our cargoes for return, or we might take in cargoes on freight for

Germany or the Baltic. The Dutch, he said, would be the greatest losers by this rivalry, but as long as the Italians and Americans would be honestly gainers, neither need be anxious for that; that there was a very good port in his master's dominions, which was perfectly free, where we might go in and out at pleasure, without being subject to duties, searches, or visits.

We then made a transition to Turkey. The Count could not, for his part, blame the Emperor for wishing to open the navigation of the Danube; his kingdom of Hungary was one of the finest countries in the world; it was one of the most fertile, producing in great abundance wines of various sorts, all excellent, though Tokay was the best; grains of every sort, in great quantities, metals of all sorts, — gold, silver, copper, iron, quicksilver; yet all these blessings of nature were rendered in a manner useless by the slavery of the Danube. The Emperor was very unfortunate, in having the Danube enslaved on one side, and the Scheldt on the other; and, in this age, when the liberty of navigation and commerce was the universal cry, he did not wonder at his impatience under it. He did not think that England would meddle in the dispute, as her trade to the Levant had declined. The Dutch had some still, but France had now the greatest part of it to Smyrna, Alexandria, Aleppo, in short, to all the trading towns of Turkey in Asia, for this is what is understood by the Levant trade. France, he thought, could not venture to engage in the war in earnest, in the present state of her finances.

I have learned, since I came here, that France is desirous that this Republic should declare herself concerning this Turkish war. But she will avoid it. Unhappily, France has lost much of her influence here. Her friends fear that the odium of losing Negapatnam will fall upon them, among the people. The English and the stadtholderians are endeavoring to detach the Republic entirely from France, and to revive the ancient connections, particularly the ancient alliance offensive and defensive, in the treaty of 1674. A Mr. Shirley, at Paris, has lately proposed to M. Boers and M. Van der Pere, two agents of the Dutch East India Company, who have been a year or two at Paris, and are reputed to be in the stadtholder's interest, that England had the best dispositions towards the Republic, and would give them ample satisfaction, if they would treat dis-

tinctly from France, and renew the ancient, cordial friendship, and proposed an interview with the Dutch ambassadors upon this subject. The agents proposed it, but Brantzen refused, to the great satisfaction of the principal republicans. Yet M. Berenger tells me, that some of the republican members begin to be afraid, and to think they shall be obliged to fall in with the English.

Upon conversing with many people in government and out of it, in Amsterdam as well as the Hague, they all complain to me of the conduct of France. They all confess that the Republic has not done so much in the war as she ought; but this is the fault of the friends of England, they say, not those of France, and the worst evils of all, that befall the latter, are the reproaches of the former, who now say insultingly, "this comes of confiding in France; we always told you that you would be cheated," &c. France ought, they say, to have considered this, and not have imputed to the Republic the faults of her enemies, because the punishment falls wholly on her friends.

I mention these things to you, because, although we are not immediately interested in them, they may have consequences which may affect us; and, therefore, you ought to know them. I think, however, upon the whole, the Republic will stand firm, and refuse to revive the alliance, though they sacrifice Negapatnam. France wishes to win the Republic into an alliance, but feels an awkwardness about proposing it, and, indeed, I doubt whether she would now succeed; she might have succeeded heretofore. But, in plain English, sir, the Count de Vergennes has no conception of the right way of negotiating with any free people or with any assembly, aristocratical or democratical. He cannot enter into the motives which govern them; he never penetrates their real system, and never appears to comprehend their constitution. With empires and monarchs and their ministers of state he negotiates aptly enough.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 1 August, 1783.

Sir, — I had last evening some conversation with D. Joas Theolonico de Almeida, the envoy extraordinary of Portugal, who desired to meet me to-day at any hour at his house or mine. I promised to visit him at twelve, which I did.

He said, he had heard that the French minister had proposed to the Duke of Manchester, at Versailles, to reduce the duties upon French wines in England to the level of those upon Portugal wines, and begged of me to inform him if it were true, because, if it were, Portugal must endeavor to indemnify herself by opening a trade with America, or some other way, for such a project would be ruinous to the sale of their wines in England, which was their only market. I answered, that I had heard of such a project among multitudes of others in private conversation, but knew no authenticity for it. We have a treaty, said he, made in 1703, by which we have stipulated with the English, to permit the importation of their cloths, upon condition that they allow the importation of Portugal wines upon paying one third of the duty upon French wines; if they violate the treaty, we shall be rid of it.

I asked him, if his Court permitted the English or any other nation to go to the Brazils. In the last century, said he, between 1660 and 1670, we did agree with Charles II., who married a daughter of Portugal, that the English should go to the Brazils, and, after that, the Dutch sued for permission to go there too, and we granted it. But we found it inconvenient, and, in 1714 or 1715, at the treaty of Utrecht, we agreed upon an article with Spain, to exclude all nations from the Brazils, and as the English ambassadors were there, we have since held that nation bound, and have confiscated their vessels, as well as the Dutch, which ventured there. The English have sometimes made strong remonstrances, but we have always told them, if we admit you, we must admit the Dutch, too, and such has been their jealousy of the Dutch, and dread of their rivalry, that this has always quieted them, choosing rather to be excluded themselves, than that the Dutch should be admitted. So that this commerce has been a long time carried on in Portuguese ships only, and directly between the Brazils and Lisbon.

I asked him, whether we might not have free communication with all their Western Islands, and whether one or all of them might not be made a depot for the produce of the Brazils, so that Portuguese ships might stop and deposit cargoes there, and American vessels take them. He said he would write about it to his Court by the next post. At present, Brazil communicated only with Lisbon, and, perhaps, it might be difficult for government to secure the duties at the Western Islands. I asked, if there were any refineries of sugar at Lisbon. He said, none. Their sugars had all been brought here by the Dutch for refining; that all their carrying trade with other parts of Europe had been carried on by the English and Dutch; that their mercantile navigation (*marine marchande*), before this war, had been upon a very poor footing, but it was now much changed, and they began to carry on their trade in their own vessels. I observed, if their trade should continue to be carried on by others, it must be indifferent to them, whether it were done in English, Dutch, or American vessels, provided it was done to their equal advantage. But, if they should persist in the desire to conduct it in their own vessels, they might purchase ships ready built in America cheaper than they could build them or buy them elsewhere. All this, he said, was true. That they could supply us with sugars, coffee, cocoa, Brazil wood, and even with tea, for they had an island called Macao, near China, which was a flourishing establishment, and sent them annually a good deal of tea, which the Dutch usually bought very cheap at Lisbon to sell again.

He asked. whether Portugal wines had been much used in America. I answered, that port wines, common Lisbon, and Carcavallos had been, before the war, frequently used, and that Madeira was esteemed above all other wine; that it was found equally wholesome and agreeable, in the heats of summer and the colds of winter, so that it would probably continue to be preferred, though there was no doubt that a variety of French wines would now be more commonly used than heretofore. He said, they should have occasion for a great deal of our fish, grain, and perhaps ships or ship-timber, and naval stores and other things, and he thought there was a prospect of a very beneficial trade with us, and he would write largely to his Court upon it. I replied, that I wondered his Court had not

sent a minister to Philadelphia, where the members and ministers of congress, and even the merchants of the city, might throw much light upon the subject, and assist in framing a treaty to the greatest possible advantage for both countries. He said, he would write for a commission and instructions to negotiate a treaty with me. I told him, that I believed his Court had already instructed their ambassador at Versailles to treat with Dr. Franklin; but that I thought that Philadelphia or Lisbon was the most proper place to treat, and that I feared mutual advantages might be lost by this method of striking up a bargain in haste in a distant country, between ministers who could not be supposed to have made of commerce a study.

In a letter from Paris yesterday, I am informed that a project of a treaty with Portugal, and another with Denmark, are to go home by Captain Barney. These projects have never been communicated to me nor to Mr. Jay. I hope that congress will not be in haste to conclude them, but take time to inform themselves of every thing which may be added, to the mutual advantage of the nations and countries concerned. I am much mistaken, if we have not lost advantages by a similar piece of cunning in the case of Sweden.

With great respect and esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 2 August, 1783.

SIR, — M. Berenger, the secretary of the French legation, has this moment left me. He came in to inform me of the news. The Empress of Russia has communicated to the King of Prussia a treaty of alliance between the Emperor of Germany and her, defensive against the Christian powers, and offensive against the Turk. The King of Prussia has answered her, "that he is very sensible upon this communication, as one is upon the communication of things of great importance." Thus wrapped up in an impenetrable reserve is this great warrior and statesman. We may discern by this answer, what all the world would know without it, namely, — that his Majesty has no joy in this new alliance. Still he expresses no sorrow, and maintains a

perfect liberty to take which side he will, or neither, at his pleasure, and the same reserve he will probably hold to the end of the war.

M. Berenger says, if Prussia is neutral, France must be so, too, for she cannot cope by land with the two Empires; that this Republic is desired to declare, but does not choose it; that they are dissatisfied, and the republicans murmur a good deal, and are wavering, and that the other party will do nothing; that England, hitherto, has favored an accommodation between Russia and the Turk; that the British ambassador at Constantinople has coöperated with the French to bring about an accommodation; that the Turks have offered Russia the free navigation of the Black Sea and passage of the Dardanelles, and the same, with a free navigation of the Danube, to the Emperor, but they will not accept it, but are determined to drive the Turks from Europe; that France has determined to put her army upon a war footing, because it has been much neglected during the late war; that he believes France and Spain will shut the Mediterranean against a Turkish fleet, as Russia, Sweden, and Denmark excluded warlike vessels from the Baltic in the last war; that this state of things gives him great pain, and must embarrass the Count de Vergennes. It is a great and difficult question, whether France should take a side. If she does not, and the Empires should prevail, it will be an immense aggrandizement of the house of Austria, which, with Russia, will become two great maritime powers; that England will act an insidious part, pretend to favor peace, secretly foment war, and join in, at the end, if she sees a favorable opportunity to crush France. These are sensible observations of M. Berenger, who added, that a new difficulty in the way of the definitive treaty had arisen between England and Spain, respecting the Musquito shore, so that more couriers must go and return.

I confess myself as much in pain at this state of things as M. Berenger, and, therefore, I wish most ardently, that we may omit no proper means of settling our question with every Court in Europe, and especially our plan of commerce with Great Britain. If this is too long left in uncertainty, the face of things may soon change, so as to involve us in the complicated, extensive, and long war which seems to be now opening.

My advices from England are, that Lord Sheffield, with his friends, — Deane, Arnold, Skene, and P. Wentworth, — are making a party unfriendly to us; that the ministry adopt their sentiments and measures; that Fox has lost his popularity, and devoted himself to North, who has the King's ear, and disposes of places; that Burke is mad with rage and passion; that the honest men are much disgusted that there is no parliamentary reform, the merchants that commerce does not revive, the moneyed men at their wit's end on account of the conduct of the bank, and the army and navy disbanding in a spirit of revolt; that it is much to be feared that in a year there will be a convulsion in the State, and public credit ruined; that the present ministry cannot stand to the meeting of parliament, for that nothing has been or can be done by them.

The prospect of returning to Paris, and living there without my family, in absolute idleness, at a time when so many and so great things want to be done for our country elsewhere, is very disagreeable. If we must live there, waiting for the moving of many waters, and treaties are to be there negotiated with the powers of Europe, or only with Denmark and Portugal, I pray that we may all be joined in the business, as we are in the commission for peace, that, at least, we may have the satisfaction of knowing what is done, and of giving a hint for the public good, if any one occurs to us, and that we may not be made the sport and ridicule of all Europe, as well as of those who contrive such humiliations for us. I declare, I had rather be door-keeper to congress, than live at Paris as I have done for the last six months. With the greatest respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

The Hague, 3 August, 1783.

SIR, — The fiscal systems of the powers of Europe have such an ill influence on commerce, that they deserve the serious attention of congress and their ministers, whenever they have under consideration a treaty with any foreign power. In conversation yesterday with M. d'Asp, the *chargé des affaires* of Sweden, I inquired of him what imposts were payable in their ports upon the importation and exportation of merchandises, and

observed to him, that I had lately seen in the gazettes that the King had taken off certain duties upon the importation of merchandises from America, in Swedish ships. He agreed that such a thing had been done. This ought to alarm us. All the powers of Europe who are called neutral, have felt a sudden increase of their navigation in the course of the late war, and the profits they have made have excited a desire to augment it still further. If they should generally exact duties of our ships, and none of their own, upon the importation of our produce, this will be as great a discouragement to our navigation as it will be an encouragement to theirs. Whether this has been attended to in the treaty with Sweden, I know not, for I have not seen it. But it ought to be carefully considered by those who negotiate the treaties with Denmark and Portugal, the Emperor and Empress, and all other powers. We have a good right to insist that no distinction shall be made in their ports between their ships and ours; that we should pay in their ports no higher duties than they pay in ours.

I should think it, therefore, advisable for congress to instruct their negotiators, to endeavor to obtain equity in this respect. This is the time for it, if ever. If we cannot obtain it by negotiation, we must think and talk of doing ourselves justice by making similar distinctions, in our own ports, between our vessels and theirs. But here again comes in the difficulty of uniting our States in such measures; a difficulty which must be surmounted, or our commerce, navigation, and marine will still be ruined, notwithstanding the conservation of the fisheries. It deserves to be considered by whom this new method of huddling up treaties at Paris is contrived, and for what purposes. It may well be conjectured, that it is done with the secret intention of preventing these things from being attended to; for there are persons who had rather that any other people should have navigation than the Americans. I have good reasons to believe that it was known at Versailles, that Mr. Dana had well digested his thoughts upon this subject, which was reason enough for some people to endeavor to take Sweden out of his hands, in whose department it was. Their success is much to be lamented.

I had, yesterday and the day before, long conversations with the Baron Van der Capellen de Pol and M. Gyselaer. They both complain to me, in the most pathetic terms, of the cruel situation

of the friends of America and France in this Republic. They both say, that they are looking round every way like drowning men for support. The Province of Friesland, their great dependence, wavers, and many of their fellow-laborers are discouraged. They both inquired of me, very earnestly, if closer connections could not be formed with us; if we could not agree to warrant to each other the liberty of navigation, or enter into an alliance offensive and defensive. They see they shall be obliged to make a shameful peace, and that the blame of it will fall upon them, which will give a triumph to the Court, and put their persons even in danger. They say, the King of France, by his ambassador, in July, 1782, gave them a positive assurance that he would never separate his cause from theirs. In consequence of this, they had instructed their ambassadors never to separate their cause from his. On their part, the agreement had been sacredly observed, but not on the other. With Great Britain enraged against them, with a formidable party in the Republic furious against them, with the King of Prussia threatening them, and abandoned by France, their prospects are, they say, as disagreeable as can be conceived.

There are many appearances of designs to excite the people to seditions, and I think it probable that the Court of London studies delays of the definitive treaty in this hope. I still believe, however, that the people will be wise, and the Republic firm, and submit to the immense losses of the war, and that of Negapatnam, rather than renew their old submission to the Court and to England. I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 10 August, 1783.

Sir, — On the 6th I left the Hague, and last night arrived here. I had several interviews on some of the last days at the Hague, which I had not time to give you an account of, as a great part of my time was taken up with visits to take leave of the Court, the president, the grand pensionary, greffier, &c., ceremonies which must be repeated at every coming and going, and upon many other occasions, to the no small interruption of business of more importance.

I asked the Count de Sanafée, the Spanish minister, with whom I have always lived upon very good terms, whether it might not be possible to persuade his Court, that it would be good policy for them to allow to the citizens of the United States of America a free port, in some of their islands at least, if not upon the continent of South America. He said, he did not know; that he thought, however, his Court would be afraid of the measure, as free ports were nests of smugglers, and afforded many facilities of illicit trade (*le commerce interlope*).

I asked him further, whether measures might not be taken at Madrid, to the end that the sugars, coffee, cocoa, &c., of their Colonies might be carried to the free ports of France, Holland, and Denmark, in the West Indies, or one of them, in Spanish vessels, that they might be there purchased by Americans. He said, he was not able to foresee any objection against this. I asked him again, what objections there could be to admitting American vessels to the Spanish islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, to carry their produce and purchase molasses, as they did in the French and Dutch Colonies. Such a commerce would be useful and profitable both to them and to us. He said, that he could not pretend to give any opinion upon any of these points; but that we must negotiate them at Madrid. I hope congress will instruct their minister at the Court of Madrid to propose all these things, and endeavor to obtain them.

The Portuguese envoy, Don Almeida, returned my visit, and brought with him a copy of the treaty between Spain and Portugal, made at Utrecht, in 1715. This treaty was signed under the warranty of Great Britain, and one article of it is, that each nation shall confine the commerce with its possessions in America to its own subjects. I had much satisfaction in the conversation of this minister, who, though a young man, appears possessed of more than common intelligence, and a desire to inform himself of every thing which can affect his nation. He is, as he told me, a nephew of the present prime minister at the Court of Lisbon. He says, that the *King*, *his master* (a style which they continue to use, although the Queen is the sovereign, and her husband is but her subject) allows but sixty thousand Dutch guilders a year to his ambassador at Versailles, which not being sufficient for his expenses at that Court, he is continued there because he is very rich; but that he is not a man of business.

He again enlarged upon the subject of Portuguese navigation, which has been prettily increased (*très joliment augmentée*) during the late war, and would have been still doubled, if the war had continued another year; that their merchants and mariners had pushed their navigation with more spirit than skill; had sent their wines and other things in prize vessels purchased in France and Spain, all over Europe; but that their seamen not being experienced, many vessels had been lost, so that the price of insurance was ten per cent. with them, when it was not more than three or four with other neutral nations; that the profits had nevertheless been so considerable, as to excite a strong inclination still to increase their shipping and carrying trade. These observations are worth repeating to congress, because all the other neutral powers have felt a like advantage. The commerce of the northern powers was so increased, and had turned the course of business that way to such a degree, as occasioned to the Danish minister, at Versailles, for example, a loss of forty per cent. upon his salary. So much was exchange affected.

The late belligerent powers having observed this sudden increase of the commerce of the neutrals, and that it was owing to the sudden growth of their navigation, are alarmed. So that the attention of all the commercial nations is now turned to navigation, carrying trade, coasting trade, &c., more than ever. We should be apprised of this, and upon our guard. Our navigation and carrying trade is not to be neglected. We have great advantages for many branches of it, and have a right to claim our natural share in it.

This morning I went out to Passy, and found, from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, that nothing farther had been done since my departure, but to deliver to Mr. Hartley a fair copy of the project of a definitive treaty which I had left with my colleagues; that Mr. Laurens had been here in my absence, and returned to England; that he was of opinion, the present British ministry would not remain a fortnight; that Mr. Hartley had been seven weeks without a letter from his principals, and then received only an apology for not having written, a promise to write soon, and authority to assure the American ministers that all would go well. These last are words of course. There are but three ways in which I can account for this conduct of the British ministry. 1. The fact is, that they foresee a change

and do not choose to commit themselves, but wish to reserve every thing for the foundation of a future opposition, that they may attack the definitive treaty which may be made by a future ministry, as they attacked the provisional and preliminary one, made by the last. 2. That they are exciting secretly and insidiously the troubles in the north, in hopes of involving France, and then assuming a higher tone. 3. That they are in expectation that seditions may be excited in Holland, and the Dutch induced to renounce France, and renew the ancient alliance with England.

I see no more appearance of the definitive treaty than I have done these six months. Mr. Hartley, I am told by Mr. Jay, thinks that the French Court wish to delay the signature; that they do not wish to see the peace finished between England and America, while matters are uncertain in the north. There are so many considerations on both sides of the question, whether the French minister wishes to finish soon or not, that it is hard to decide it. Neither Court possibly is very zealous to finish, while so great a scene as the northern war lies under so much obscurity. I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 13 August, 1783.

Sir, — Yesterday I went to Court with Dr. Franklin, and presented to the Count de Vergennes our project of a definitive treaty, who told us he would examine it, and give us his sentiments upon it.

It was ambassadors' day, and I had conversations with a number of ministers, of which it is proper I should give you an account.

The Dutch ambassador, Berkenrode, told me, that last Saturday the Count de Vergennes went to Paris, and dined with the imperial ambassador, the Count de Mercy, in company with the Duke of Manchester, the Count d'Aranda, the Prince Bariatinski, and M. Markow, with their secretaries; that, after dinner, the secretaries, in presence of all the ministers, read over, compared, and corrected the definitive treaties between France and Great Britain, and between Spain and Great Britain, and finally

agreed upon both. So that they are now ready for signature by the ministers of Great Britain, France, and Spain, as principals, and by those of the two Imperial Courts as mediators.

The Duke of Manchester told me, that Mr. Hartley's courier, who carried our project of a treaty, arrived in London last Saturday, and might be expected here next Saturday on his return.

In the evening, on my return from Versailles, Mr. Hartley called upon me at my house, and informed me, that he had just received a courier from Westminster, who had brought him the ratification of our provisional treaty, under the King's own hand, and under the great seal of the kingdom, inclosed in a silver box, ornamented with golden tassels as usual, which he was ready to exchange to-morrow morning. He informed me, farther, that he had received very satisfactory letters from the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox, and the strongest assurances that the dispositions of his Court were very good to finish immediately, and to arrange all things upon the best footing; that he had farther received plenary authority to sign the definitive treaty to-morrow or to-night, if we pleased; that he had received a draft ready formed, which he would show us.

We agreed to go together in the morning to my colleagues; and this morning we went out in Mr. Hartley's carriage, exchanged the ratifications, and he produced to us his project of a definitive treaty. It is the provisional treaty in so many words, without addition or diminution. It is only preceded with a preamble, which makes it a definitive treaty. And he proposed to us, that all matters of discussion, respecting commerce or other things, should be left to be discussed by ministers, to be mutually appointed to reside in London and Philadelphia.

We told him, that it had been proposed to us, that the ministers of the two Imperial Courts should sign the treaty as mediators, and that we had answered that we had no objection to it. He said, he had unanswerable ones. First, he had no authority, and could not obtain any, certainly under ten days, nor probably ever. For, secondly, it would, he thought, give great offence to his Court, and they never would agree that any nation should interfere between them and America. Thirdly, for his part, he was fully against it, and should write his opi-

nion to his Court. If he was about to marry his daughter, or set up a son in the world, after he was of age, he would never admit any of his neighbors to intervene, and sign any contract he might make, as mediators. There was no need of it.

We told him there was no need of warmth upon the occasion, or any pretence for his Court to take offence; that it had been proposed to us that the imperial ministers should sign as mediators. Our answer had been, that we had no objections; that we were willing and ready to consent to it, or even to request it. His Court had a right to consent or dissent, as it thought proper. To be sure, the mediation could not take place without their consent. That he might write to his Court the proposition, and if he received orders to consent or dissent, it would be equally well. In the mean time, we were ready to sign the definitive treaty, either with or without the mediation, whenever the other parties were ready to sign, according to his project just received from his Court, that is, simply a repetition of the provisional treaty.

We have agreed to this, because it is plain that all propositions for alterations in the provisional articles will be an endless discussion, and that we must give more than we can hope to receive. The critical state of things in England and at the Court of Versailles, and in all the rest of Europe, affords pressing motives to get this business finished.

Mr. Hartley told us from his Court, that they had expected an American minister at St. James's these three months, and that all further matters might be there discussed. He also announced to us the birth of another princess, the fifteenth child of the Queen, upon which event he received our congratulations, which I hope congress will approve, and repeat by their minister in London; for these personal and family compliments are more attended to in courts, and have greater effects, than may be imagined.

I lament very much that we cannot obtain an explanation of the article respecting the refugees, and that respecting debts; but it is plain we must give more than they are worth for such explanations; and what is of more decisive importance, we must make a long delay, and put infinitely greater things at hazard by this means. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 13 August, 1783.

Sir, — Yesterday, at Versailles, the Baron de Walterstorff came to me, and told me he had delivered to Dr. Franklin a project of a treaty between the Court of Denmark and the United States, and asked me, if Dr. Franklin had shown it to me. I answered him, that I knew nothing of it. He said, he wondered at that; he presumed it was because of my absence at the Hague, for that it had been shown to Mr. Jay. There, by the way, he was misinformed; for, upon my return from Versailles, I called upon Mr. Jay, on purpose to ask him, and he assured me he had not seen it. I asked Walterstorff, if his orders were to propose his project to us all. He said, no; this Court had been informed, that Dr. Franklin was the minister authorized and empowered by congress to treat with all the powers of Europe, and they had for this reason sent him orders to deliver the project to Dr. Franklin, but he supposed Dr. Franklin would consult his colleagues. The same information, I doubt not, has been given to the Court of Portugal and every other Court in Europe, namely, — that Dr. Franklin is alone empowered to treat with them; and, in consequence of it, very probably, propositions have been, or will be made, to him from all of them, and he will keep the whole as secret as he can from Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Dana, and me.

Now I beg to be informed by congress, whether he has such authority or not. Having never been informed of such powers, I do not believe he has them. I remember there was, seven years ago, a resolution of congress, that their commissioners at Versailles should have power to treat with the other powers of Europe; but, upon the dissolution of that commission, this authority was dissolved with it; or, if not, it still resides in Mr. Deane, Mr. Lee, and myself, who were once in that commission, as well as Dr. Franklin. And if it is by virtue of this power he acts, he ought at least to communicate with me, who alone am present. I think, however, that neither he nor I have any legal authority, and, therefore, that he ought to communicate every thing of this kind to all the ministers here or hereabout; Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, and myself, at least.

It is not from the vain wish of seeing my poor name upon a treaty, that I write this. If the business is well done, it is not of much importance in itself who does it. But my duty to my country obliges me to say, that I seriously believe this clandestine manner of smuggling treaties is contrived by European politicians on purpose that Mr. Jay and I may not have an opportunity of suggesting ideas for the preservation of American navigation, transport trade, and nurseries of seamen. But, in another point of view, it is of equal importance. This method reflects contempt and ridicule upon your other ministers. When all Europe sees that a number of your ministers are kept here as a kind of satellites to Dr. Franklin in the affair of peace, but that they are not to be consulted or asked a question, or even permitted to know the important negotiations which are here going on with all Europe, they fall into contempt. It cannot be supposed that congress mean to cast this contempt upon us, because it cannot be supposed they mean to destroy the reputation, character, influence, and usefulness of those to whom in other respects they intrust powers of so much consequence; and, therefore, I am persuaded that congress is as much imposed on by it as the Courts of Europe are.

I asked the Baron, what was the substance of the treaty. He said, his Court had taken for a model my treaty with Holland. I said nothing to him in answer to this, but I beg leave to say to congress, that the negotiation with Holland was in very different circumstances. We were then in the fiercest rage of the war. A treaty with that Republic was at that time of as much weight in the war as the captivity of Burgoyne or Cornwallis. A treaty with any power was worth a battle or a siege, and no moments of time were to be lost, especially in a country so divided, that, unanimity being necessary, every proposition was dangerous. At present, the case is altered, and we may take time to weigh and inquire. The Baron tells me that St. Thomas and St. John, two of their islands, are free ports, but that St. Croix, which is of more importance than both, is not; that foreign vessels, our vessels, are permitted to bring our produce and carry away half the value in sugar, &c. The island produces, *communibus annis*, twenty thousand hogsheads of sugar, and their molasses is better than that of the French, because

they make only "*sucres brutes.*" He says, tney have some sugar-houses at Copenhagen. But, notwithstanding this, I think it is worth while for congress to try if they cannot, by the treaty, obtain a right to take away cargoes to the full value of those they bring. It is worth while to try, too, if we cannot obtain a tariff, to ascertain the duties to be paid on exportation and importation. It is worth while, too, to endeavor to get the duties ascertained in the Danish ports in Europe, at least that we may not pay in their ports more than they pay in ours; or that our vessels may not be obliged to pay more than theirs, especially when we import our own produce. I pretend not to be a master of these commercial subjects, but I think that Dr. Franklin has not studied the subject more than myself; that both of us need the advice of Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay, and that all of us want that of American merchants, and especially of congress. I am, therefore, against this secret and hasty method of concluding treaties, at this time, when they may be more maturely reflected on.

I know very well to what ill-natured remarks these reflections are liable, but they shall not hinder me from doing my duty. I do seriously believe, there are clandestine insinuations going about to every commercial nation in the world, to excite them to increase their own navigation and seamen at the expense of ours, and that this smuggling of treaties is one means of accomplishing the design, although Dr. Franklin may not be let into the secret of it. For, from long experience and observation, I am persuaded that one minister at least and his dependents would prefer that the navigation of any nation in the world, even that of the English, should grow, rather than ours. In the last *Courier de l'Europe*, it is said that all the commercial powers are concerting measures to clip the wings of the eagle, and to prevent us from having a navy. I believe it. That is to say, I believe measures are taken with them all to bring them into this system, although they are not let into the secret design, and do not know from whom the measures come, nor with what views promoted.

With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 15 August, 1783.

Sir, — France, England, Spain, and America are all agreed; but Mr. Hartley is sanguine that the treaty will not be signed, because, he says, the Count de Vergennes does not mean to sign it. His reasons for this opinion I know not, and I think he is mistaken. It is very certain, however, that the French minister is embarrassed, and would not, perhaps, be sorry to find good reasons for postponing the signature for some time.

Congress may judge in some degree of the situation of things, by the following conversation which I had this morning with M. Brantzen, the ambassador extraordinary from the States-General, to whom I returned the visit he made me yesterday, when I was abroad.

He told me, "that he was as far, and indeed farther than ever, from an agreement with the Duke of Manchester. He had given up, he said, all pretensions to a compensation for the unjust damages of the war, and he had in a manner waved his claim of the restitution of Negapatnam. But the Duke of Manchester now insisted peremptorily upon, not only all the ancient salutations from the Dutch flag to the English, but an unlimited liberty of navigation in all the seas of the East Indies. He had despatched an express to the Hague the day before yesterday, who would arrive to-day; but the grand pensionary was sick, and the states of Holland not sitting; so that there must be some time before he could have an answer. Concerning the salutes to the flag, there would be different opinions, but they would be all of a mind against the liberty of navigation in the Indies. He could not, therefore, expect from their High Mightinesses permission to sign, and the Count de Vergennes would be embarrassed. All the other powers were ready, and to make them wait would raise a cry.

"To sign without Holland would raise a terrible storm in Holland against the Count, and no small one in France. And even if the States should authorize him to sign a shameful peace, this would raise no less clamor in Holland and France against the Count. He will, therefore, not know what to do, and will seek to postpone; for the parties of the Marquis de

Castries and of M. de Breteuil will take advantage of every clamor against the Count, as these parties wish M. de Breteuil in his place. I am persuaded, therefore, that the Count himself looks upon his own situation as very hazardous. It has been so a long time. It was his instability in his place that made him sign the preliminaries, for money to carry on the war could not be obtained without M. Necker, and M. Necker would not come in with the Count, as they were and are sworn enemies to each other. He was, therefore, reduced to the dilemma to make peace or go out. I have good reasons to believe that the Maréchal de Castries disapproves of the Count's conduct towards our Republic. He certainly deceived me. The states-general did very wrong to bind me to leave so much to the French minister; but I thought him an honest man, and that I could trust him; so I left things to him, according to my instructions, depending on his word, and at last I found myself the dupe. No, not a dupe, for I am always upon my guard not to be a dupe. But he deceived me; and when one whom I have reason to believe an honest man deceives me, I cannot call myself a dupe, for I can do no other than believe an honest man, when he gives me his word."

In several of your letters, sir, you have insisted on my reciting to you my conversations with foreign ministers. You must not esteem them infallible oracles. They are often mistaken in their facts, and sometimes wrong in their reasonings. But these sentiments of M. Brantzen are of so much importance, that I thought proper to recite them. It will, indeed, be necessary for your foreign ministers to be more inquisitive than we have been, and to transmit to congress more information concerning the intrigues of courts than we have done. If the Maréchal de Castries and M. de Breteuil, who is now in the council, and M. Necker, are not friends to the Count de Vergennes, and all the world here agree they are not, congress ought to know it. Although I would have so much respect to the Queen, as not to name her Majesty upon unnecessary occasions, yet, upon this, when she is sister to the Emperor, and the question at Court is, whether there shall be a war with her brother, it is obviously a matter of so much importance, as to make it a duty to communicate to congress her sentiments, which all men here agree are favorable to de Castries and Breteuil, but

not partial to the present minister of foreign affairs. I said, in a former letter, if this minister continues, there will be war; but I am told by some, if there is war, he cannot continue; for neither he nor his friends can raise the money. M. de Rayneval, however, affirmed positively to Mr. Hartley, that nothing but death could remove the Count.[1]

All these things show the critical and uncertain constitution of this Court, and the uncertainty when the definitive treaty will be signed, notwithstanding that four powers are agreed, and, therefore, I can give congress no clear information upon that head. This is a great chagrin to me, both on account of the public and myself, because I am as uncertain about my own destiny as that of the public.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 5 September, 1783.

SIR, — On Wednesday, the 3d day of this month, the American ministers met the British minister at his lodgings at the *Hôtel de York*, and signed, sealed, and delivered the definitive treaty of peace between the United States of America and the King of Great Britain. Although it is but a confirmation or repetition of the provisional articles, I have the honor to congratulate congress upon it, as it is a completion of the work of peace, and the best that we could obtain. Nothing remains now to be done, but a treaty of commerce; but this, in my opinion, cannot be negotiated without a new commission from congress to some one or more persons. Time, it is easy to foresee, will not be likely to render the British nation more disposed to a regulation of commerce favorable to us, and, therefore, my advice is, to issue a commission as soon as may be.

There is another subject on which I beg leave to represent to congress my sentiments, because they seem to me of import-

[1] This prediction proved to be correct. But much light is shed upon the facts stated in this letter, and the action of the Maréchal de Castries, by the fifth volume of the *Mémoires Historiques et Politiques du Règne de Louis XVI.*, by J. L. Soulavie. The memoir, reviewing the policy of Count de Vergennes, read in the cabinet by De Castries, is there given in full, vol. v. pp. 9 – 96.

ance, and because they differ from many sanguine opinions, which will be communicated to the members of that assembly from partisans both of England and France.

In the late deliberations concerning an acceptance of the mediation of the Imperial Courts, the British minister refused it, and in the conferences we had with the Count de Vergennes upon this subject, it was manifest enough to me that he was not fond of our accepting it; for, although he maintained a perfect impartiality of language, neither advising us for nor against the measure, yet, at last, when it was observed that Mr. Hartley was averse to it, he turned to Dr. Franklin, and said that we must agree with Mr. Hartley about it, with such a countenance, air, and tone of voice (for from these you must often collect the sentiments of ministers) as convinced me he did not wish the mediation should take place.

It was not a subject which would bear insisting on, either way. I therefore made no difficulty. But I am, upon recollection, fully of opinion that we should have done wisely to have sent our letter to the imperial ministers, accepting the mediation on our part. The signature of these ministers would have given us reputation in Europe and among our own citizens. I mention these, because I humbly conceive that congress ought, in all their proceedings, to consider the opinion that the United States or the people of America will entertain of themselves. We may call this national vanity or national pride, but it is the main principle of the national sense of its own dignity, and a passion in human nature, without which nations cannot preserve the character of man. Let the people lose this sentiment, as in Poland, and a partition of their country will soon take place. Our country has but lately been a dependent one, and our people, although enlightened and virtuous, have had their minds and hearts habitually filled with all the passions of a dependent and subordinate people; that is to say, with fear, with diffidence, and distrust of themselves, with admiration of foreigners, &c. Now, I say, that it is one of the most necessary and one of the most difficult branches of the policy of congress to eradicate from the American mind every remaining fibre of this fear and self-diffidence on one hand, and of this excessive admiration of foreigners on the other.

It cannot be doubted one moment that a solemn acknow-

ledgment of us by the signature of the two Imperial Courts would have had such a tendency in the minds of our countrymen. But we should also consider upon every occasion how our reputation will be affected in Europe. We shall not find it easy to keep up the respect for us that has been excited by the continual publication of the exploits of the war. In the calm of peace, little will be said about us in Europe unless we prepare for it, but by those who have designs upon us. We may depend upon it, every thing will be said in Europe and in the gazettes which anybody in Europe wants to have repeated in America, to make such impressions upon the minds of our citizens as he desires. It will become us, therefore, to do every thing in our power to make reasonable and just impressions upon the public opinion in Europe. The signature of the two Imperial Courts would have made a deep and important impression in our favor upon full one half of Europe, as friends to those Courts, and upon all the other half, as enemies.

I need not explain myself further. I may, however, add, that Americans can scarcely conceive the decisive influence of the governments of Europe upon their people. Every nation is a piece of clockwork, every wheel is under the absolute direction of the sovereign as its weight or spring. In consequence of this, all that moiety of mankind that are subject to the two Imperial Courts and their allies, would, in consequence of their mediation, have been openly and decidedly our friends at this hour, and the other half of Europe would certainly have respected us the more for this. But, at present, the two Imperial Courts, not having signed the treaty, all their friends are left in a state of doubt and timidity concerning us. From all the conversations I have had with the Count de Mercy and M. Markow, it is certain that the two Courts wished, as these ministers certainly were ambitious, to sign our treaty. They and their sovereigns wished that their names might be read in America, and there respected as our friends. But this is now past. England and France will be most perfectly united in all artifices and endeavors to keep down our reputation at home and abroad, to mortify our self-conceit, and to lessen us in the opinion of the world. If we will not see, we must be the dupes; we need not, for we have in our own power, with the common blessing, the means of every thing we want. There is but one

course now left to retrieve the error, and that is, to send a minister to Vienna with power to make a treaty with both the Imperial Courts. Congress must send a minister first, or it will never be done. The Emperor never sends first, nor will England ever send a minister to America until congress shall have sent one to London.

To form immediate commercial connections with that half of Europe which ever has been, and with little variations ever will be, opposite to the House of Bourbon, is a fundamental maxim of that system of American politics which I have pursued invariably from the beginning of this war. It is the only means of preserving the respect of the House of Bourbon itself; it is the only means in conjunction with our connections with the House of Bourbon, already formed, to secure us the respect of England for any length of time, and to keep us out of another war with that kingdom. It is, in short, the only possible means of securing to our country that peace, neutrality, impartiality, and indifference in European wars, which, in my opinion, we shall be unwise in the last degree, if we do not maintain. It is, besides, the only way in which we can improve and extend our commercial connections to the best advantage.

With great respect, I am,

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 8 September, 1783.

Sir, — Yesterday morning, Mr. Jay informed me, that Dr. Franklin had received, and soon after the Doctor put into my hands the resolution of congress of the 1st of May,[1] ordering a commission and instructions to be prepared to those gentlemen and myself for making a treaty of commerce with Great Britain. This resolution, with your Excellency's letter, arrived

[1] "Ordered, that a commission be prepared to John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay, authorizing them, or either of them, in the absence of the others, to enter into a treaty of commerce between the United States of America and Great Britain, subject to the revisal of the contracting parties, previous to its final conclusion; and, in the mean time, to enter into a commercial convention, to continue in force one year."

very seasonably, as Mr. Hartley was setting off for London with information from us that our powers were executed.

I am very sensible of the honor that is done me by this resolution of congress, and of the great importance of the business committed to our care; and shall not, therefore, hesitate to take a part in it. I can attend to this business, and at the same time have some care of your affairs in Holland; and in case the present loan should be full in the course of the next winter, I can open a new one, either by going to Amsterdam, or by having the obligations sent to me in Paris to be signed. In this way there will be no additional expense to the public, as I have informed M. Dumas that there must be no expense made at the Hague on my account, or on account of congress, but that all his expenses must be borne by himself, or he must at least settle them with congress. I have so much regard for this gentleman, and such an opinion of his worth and merit, that I cannot but recommend him upon this occasion to congress, for the commission of secretary of that legation; but as economy is and ought to be carefully attended to, I presume not to point out the salary which will be proper. There are so many ways of pillaging public men in Europe, that it will be difficult for congress to conceive the expenses which are unavoidable in these countries.

If the principle of economy should restrain congress from sending ministers to Vienna, Petersburg, Copenhagen, and Lisbon, they will probably send a commission to Paris to negotiate treaties there, because I think it will appear to be of great importance, both in a political and commercial light, to have treaties with those powers. If this should be the case, as three of us will be now obliged to attend at Paris the tedious negotiation with England, we can all at the same time, and with the same expense, attend to the negotiations with the other powers, which will afford to all an opportunity of throwing in any hints which may occur for the public good, and will have a much better appearance in the eyes of Europe and America. I do not hesitate, therefore, to request, that if such a commission or commissions should be sent, all your ministers in Europe may be inserted in it. If the arrangement should make any difficulty in America, it will make none with me; for, although I think there was good reason for the order

in which the names stand in the new commission for peace, and in the resolution for a new commission for a treaty of commerce, that reason will not exist in any future commission.

Mr. Hartley's powers are sufficient to go through the negotiation with us, and I suppose it will be chiefly conducted at Paris; yet we may all think it proper to make a tour to London, for a few weeks, especially in case any material obstacle should arise. We are told that such a visit would have a good effect at Court and with the nation; at least, it seems clear it would do no harm.

With the greatest respect and esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 8 September, 1783.

SIR, — As the resolution of congress of the 1st of May has determined it to be my duty to remain in Europe at least another winter, I shall be obliged to say many things to your Excellency by letter, which I hoped to have had the honor of saying upon the floor of your house. Some of these things may be thought at first of little consequence, but time, and inquiry, and consideration, will show them to have weight. Of this sort is the subject of this letter.

The views and designs, the intrigues and projects of courts, are let out by insensible degrees, and with infinite art and delicacy, in the gazettes. These channels of communication are very numerous, and they are artificially complicated in such a manner, that very few persons are able to trace the sources from whence insinuations and projects flow. The English papers are an engine by which every thing is scattered all over the world. They are open and free. The eyes of mankind are fixed upon them. They are taken by all courts and all politicians, and by almost all gazetteers. Of these papers, the French emissaries in London, even in time of war, but especially in time of peace, make a very great use; they insert in them things which they wish to have circulated far and wide. Some of the paragraphs inserted in them will do to circulate through all Europe, and some will not

do, in the *Courier de l'Europe*. This is the most artful paper in the world; it is continually accommodating between the French and English ministry. If it should offend the English essentially, the ministry would prevent its publication; if it should sin against the French unpardonably, the ministry would instantly stop its circulation; it is, therefore, continually under the influence of the French ministers, whose underworkers have many things translated into it from the English papers, and many others inserted in it originally, both to the end that they may be circulated over the world, and particularly that they may be seen by the King of France, who reads this paper constantly. From the English papers and the *Courier de l'Europe* many things are transferred into various other gazettes, — the *Courier du Bas Rhin*, the *Gazette de Deux Ponts*, the *Courier d'Avignon*, and the *Gazette des Pays Bas*. The gazettes of Leyden and Amsterdam are sometimes used for the more grave and solid objects, those of Deux Ponts and Avignon for popular topics, the small talk of coffee-houses, and still smaller and lower circles.

All these papers and many others discover a perpetual complaisance for the French ministry, because they are always in their power so entirely, that if an offensive paragraph appears, the entrance and distribution of the gazette may be stopped by an order from Court, by which the gazetteer loses the sale of his paper in France, which is a great pecuniary object. Whoever shall hereafter come to Europe in any public employment, and take in the papers above enumerated, will acknowledge his obligations to me for mentioning them. He will find them a constant source of amusement, and sometimes of useful discoveries. I may hereafter possibly entertain congress with some curious speculations from these gazettes, which all have their attention fixed upon us, and very often honor us with their animadversions, sometimes with their grave counsels, but oftener still, with very subtle and sly insinuations.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Paris, 10 September, 1783.

Sir, — As I am to remain in Europe for some time longer, I beg leave to take a cursory view of what appears necessary or expedient to be further done in Europe; for I conceive it to be not only the right, but the duty of a foreign minister, to advise his sovereign, according to his lights and judgment, although the more extensive information and superior wisdom of the sovereign may frequently see cause to pursue a different conduct.

With Spain, no doubt, congress will negotiate by a particular minister, either the present one or another, and perhaps it would be proper that the same should treat with Naples. With the two Empires, Prussia, Denmark, Portugal, Sardinia, and Tuscany, I humbly conceive, it might be proper to negotiate, and perhaps with Hamburg; but there are other powers with whom it is more necessary to have treaties than it ought to be; I mean Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli.

I presume that congress will not think it expedient to be at the expense of sending ministers to all these powers, if to any. Perhaps in the present state of our finances, it may not be worth while to send any. Yet the present time is the best to negotiate with all. I submit it to consideration, then, whether it is not advisable to send a commission to such ministers as you judge proper, with full powers to treat with all, to the ministers now in Paris, or to any others. But I humbly conceive, that if powers to treat with all or any of these States are sent to any of your ministers now here, it would be for the public good, that they should be sent to all. If congress can find funds to treat with the Barbary powers, the ministers here are the best situated, for they should apply to the Court of Versailles and their High Mightinesses in the first place, that orders should be sent to their consuls, according to treaties, to assist us. Ministers here may carry on this negotiation by letters, or may be empowered to send an agent, if necessary. I have no private interest in this business. My salary will be the same, my expenses more, and labor much increased by such a measure. But, as it is of public importance, I think that no unnecessary

delicacies should restrain me from suggesting these hints to congress. Whatever their determination may be, it will be satisfactory to me.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect,

Your Excellency's, &c.

John Adams.

ROBERT MORRIS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office of Finance, 20 September, 1783.

Sir, — I have been duly honored with your Excellency's favors of the 5th, 10th, and 11th of July.[1] I have taken the liberty to make some extracts from the two latter, which are transmitted in a letter to the Governor of Massachusetts, a copy whereof is inclosed. Permit me, sir, to give my feeble approbation and applause to those sentiments of wisdom and integrity which are as happily expressed as they are forcibly conceived. The necessity of strengthening our confederation, providing for our debts, and forming some federal constitution, begins to be most seriously felt. But, unfortunately for America, the narrow and illiberal prejudices of some have taken such deep root, that it must be difficult and may prove impracticable to remove them.

I agree with you, sir, in opinion, that the late peace was not, all circumstances considered, a bad one for England. It is, undoubtedly, a peace equally glorious to, and necessary for, America. All ranks of men in this country feel, as well as perceive, the benefits of it, and the fault-finders (for such men there always will be) are borne down by the general torrent of applause.

I was happy to learn, by the Washington packet, that you intended a short trip to Amsterdam for the purpose of urging on the loan. I hope you may have met with the success due to your zeal and abilities; I shall ask no greater.

With perfect respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

Robert Morris.

[1] See pp. 81, 91, and 92, of this volume.

(*Inclosed.*)

ROBERT MORRIS TO THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Office of Finance, 20 September, 1783.

Sir, — I should do injustice to my own feelings, if I did not inclose you the extracts of letters I have lately received under date of the 10th and 11th July, from a wise and virtuous citizen of your State. The sentiments on public credit, contained in these letters, so just and forcible in themselves, must receive a double weight from the consideration, that Mr. Adams, during his late important negotiations, has been in a situation to see, feel, and know the importance of the subject on which he writes, and to search, scrutinize, and examine it to the bottom.

I am, sir, &c.

Robert Morris.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 16 October, 1783.

Sir, — Some time having elapsed since we had the honor of addressing your Excellency, we now take the liberty of informing you, sir, of our having received letters from Mr. Morris, giving us intelligence of certain drafts which he had partly already made on us, and which he should yet make, though the total amount together was much more than we now have in cash for the United States of America. His Excellency is in the idea that before this time we should have provided that for which M. Grand may have occasion, though, not exactly knowing what that may be, we have given the necessary advice to M. Grand, that he must place no reliance upon being furnished by us; and we thought it advisable, also, to give your Excellency the same notice.

It is exceedingly painful for us to be obliged to say that the success of the loan, since the month of August, is not such as we had reason to expect, when in the summer we had the honor of conversing with your Excellency. Besides the uncommon scarcity of money, a principal cause of the loan not succeeding

is the great number of accounts received of disputes in America between the particular States and congress. It is true, this intelligence is mostly communicated by the English newspapers, and is worthy of little or no credit, even as we ourselves look upon it; but it makes more impression upon the money-lenders, who always incline to mistrust without cause, especially at a time when, through a great concurrence of loans, they are not at a loss with their money. We are constantly hoping we shall be able, by receiving direct intelligence from America, to evince the falsehood of the English accounts, or that your Excellency or the other ministers would do it but to this time is this hope not realized. If your Excellency was in possession of authentic intelligence upon this matter, we think the publication of it would do much service in procuring a better success to our continual endeavors for selling of the bonds.

In sentiments of the greatest respect, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nich. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Princeton, 1 November, 1783.

Sir, — I have the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your several public letters, under the dates of June the 23d to July the 18th inclusive, by Captain Barney. Nothing is done, in consequence of these letters, but what is contained in the instructions inclosed in my official letter by this opportunity to the commissioners jointly.

Congress have not come to any further determination on your last letters relative to your resignation, on account of the peace arrangement not being yet settled. Perhaps there will be but very few ministers employed in Europe, and these in the character of residents or simply ministers.

The conduct of Great Britain does not appear yet very conciliating, and her measures on this side the water have rather tended to irritate than otherwise. Congress will not be in a hurry to send a minister to the Court of London till they see

how the definitive treaty will end. We have an account this day from Colonel Ogden, that it was signed on the 3d of September, and that Mr. Thaxter is on his way with it, whom we long to see.

Your letters on the subject of our credit abroad, and the strengthening and cementing the union at home, came at a happy moment, and have had a very good effect. Your countrymen were running wild on this subject, but your observations and opinion have helped to check them, and the legislature of Massachusetts have passed the five per cent. impost recommended by congress.

M. Van Berckel is arrived, and yesterday received his first public audience of congress. His address and our answer I send to the commissioners jointly. He appears to justify the high opinion we had formed of the wisdom of the states of the United Netherlands. Their choice of a minister so consonant to the temper and manners of the citizens of these States, shows their judgment and prudence. We are much pleased with this gentleman, and, as far as I can judge from present appearances, I may venture to predict that he will cement the union of the two Republics.

I shall leave the chair of congress on Monday, and return to private life at Elizabethtown, after almost eight years spent in the service of my country. I rejoice to have seen the end of all our labors so happily accomplished, and shall ever revere those great men who have lent a helping hand to the glorious work. In private or public life, I shall be always glad of the honor of a line from you, sir, if but to announce your health and welfare.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Elias Boudinot.

ROBERT MORRIS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office of Finance, 5 November, 1783.

Sir, — I am honored with your Excellency's favor of the 28th of July, from Amsterdam, for which I pray you to accept my acknowledgments. I am perfectly in sentiment with you, that it is best to avoid government interference in the affair of our loan. If there were no other reason, I should not like the demand of grateful acknowledgment which would be erected

on that foundation. We hear enough already of our national obligations, and I most heartily wish, for my own part, that we could at once acquit them all, even to the uttermost farthing; for I seriously believe that both nations and individuals generally prove better friends, when no obligations can be charged, nor acknowledgments and retributions claimed on either side.

I am also very strongly in opinion with you, that remittances from this country would greatly uphold our credit in Europe, for, in mercantile life, nothing vivifies credit like punctuality and plenteousness of remittance. The plan you propose to obtain them, might also be attended with some good consequences; but there are impediments in the way of its success, which it would be tedious to detail, and which indeed you could not be so perfectly master of without being on the spot. I shall not, therefore, go into that matter at present, and the more especially as we have now good hopes that the plan of congress will be adopted by the States. Last evening I received advice that Massachusetts had acceded, and I have a double pleasure in announcing this to you, as they certainly would not have come in but for the sentiments contained in your letters.

Let me then, my dear sir, most heartily congratulate you on those virtuous emotions which must swell your bosom at the reflection that you have been the able, the useful, and, what is above all other things, the honest servant of a Republic, indebted to you in a great degree for her first efforts at independent existence. That you may long live to enjoy those pleasing reflections which flow from the memory of an active and beneficial exercise of time and talents, is the sincere wish of your most obedient and humble servant,

Robert Morris.

E. A. HOLYOKE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Salem, 6 November, 1783.

Sir, — Your Excellency's favors done to the Massachusetts Medical Society call for their most grateful acknowledgments;[1] and it is at their desire I now inclose to your Excellency the copy of a vote from their records, expressive of the gratitude

[1] See pp. 68 – 70 of this volume.

they feel and the obligations they are under to your Excellency for your kind attention to their interests, and for the honor done them by introducing them to an acquaintance with so respectable a body as the Société Royale de Médecine at Paris, to which, permit me, sir, to add my own personal thanks; and as while we continue to prosecute the ends of our institution, we are promoting the cause of science and humanity, so we shall still hope for the continuance of your Excellency's good offices.

I have the honor to be, &c.

E. A. Holyoke.

(*Inclosure.*)

At a meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Society in Boston, October 15, 1783, —

Voted, unanimously, that the thanks of this Society be returned to his Excellency John Adams, Minister Plenipotentiary for the United States of America, for his early attention to the interests and honor of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and for his assiduous endeavors to introduce the institution to the notice of the Royal Society of Medicine at Paris.

A true copy from the records.

N. W. Appleton, *Secretary.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

London, 9 November, 1783.

Sir, — About the 14th of September I was seized at Paris with a fever, which proved to be a dangerous one, and brought me very low, so that I was unable to attend to any business for some time. On the 20th of October, in pursuance of the advice of my friends, I set out from Auteuil, a village in the neighborhood of Passy, for London, which city I reached by slow journeys the 26th. I found my strength increase as I advanced, and my health is so much improved that I am persuaded the last sickness has been of service to me, having never enjoyed, since my great sickness at Amsterdam, so good health as at present. Mr. Jay had set off for London about ten days before me, and, since my arrival, we have been much together, and have found every thing agreeable, notwithstanding the

innumerable and incessant lies and nonsense of the newspapers.

As I came here in a private capacity altogether, I have not visited any one of the ministers, nor any one of the foreign ambassadors, and I am inclined to think, upon the whole, that I shall not, unless we should receive the commission to treat of commerce which congress resolved on the 1st of last May, while I stay here.

The whig part of the present administration are much embarrassed with the tory part and their refugees; so that the spirit of the present administration, I must in duty say, is not so friendly to the United States as it ought to be; for want of powers, however, we can reduce nothing to a certainty. We expect every day to receive our commission and instructions.

Mr. Hartley thinks himself empowered to finish the business with us by his former commission. The ministry are of the same opinion; and it is no doubt true; so that as soon as our commission and instructions arrive we shall enter upon the conferences. But whether we shall go to Paris, or Dr. Franklin will come here, at present I know not. The negotiation, I am persuaded, would succeed better here than at Paris.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO WILLIAM ELLERY AND OTHERS.

London 12 November, 1783.

Gentlemen, — I duly received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 26th of May,[1] with two addresses inclosed, — one to the ministers and churches of the reformed in Holland, the other to those in France, — and it should have been answered sooner, had not a long sickness prevented. I am duly sensible of the honor you do me, gentlemen, by confiding this benevolent office to my care; and it would give me great pleasure to be able to give you encouragement to hope for success.

But solicitations of this kind are considered so differently in America and in Europe, that an appointment which would be

[1] See page 61 of this volume.

considered as very honorable in the former, is regarded in the latter in a different light. This diversity of sentiment is so real and so serious, that, in the opinion of others, as well as in my own, it is inconsistent with the public character I have at present the honor to hold under the United States, for me to accept of this. It is agreed on all hands, that my name appearing in this business would do a great injury to the loan of which I have the care in Holland, so that I must beg the favor of you, gentlemen, to make my apology to the Second Congregational Church in Newport for declining a trust which my regard to their constitution, as well as their welfare and my personal respect for you, would have induced me to accept with pleasure, had it been compatible with my duty.

On occasion of a great fire in Charlestown formerly, and of the application of Dartmouth College lately, I have seen that there is such a degree of ridicule attends such solicitations of benevolence in Europe, that I cannot advise you to expect any relief this way. If you were to send an agent on purpose, in my opinion, he would not obtain enough to pay his expenses.

With great respect and esteem,

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

London, 13 November, 1783.

Sir, — If any one should ask me what is the system of the present administration, I should answer, "to keep their places." Every thing they say or do, appears evidently calculated to that end, and no ideas of public good, no national object, is suffered to interfere with it.

In order to drive out Shelburne, they condemned his peace, which all the whig part of them would have been very glad to have made, and have gloried in the advantages of it. In order to avail themselves of the old habits and prejudices of the nation, they now pretend to cherish the principles of the navigation act, and the King has been advised to recommend this in his speech, and the lords have echoed it in very strong terms.

The coalition appears to stand on very strong ground; the lords and great commoners, who compose it, count a great majority of members of the house of commons who are

returned by themselves, every one of whom is a dead vote. They are endeavoring to engage the Bedford interest with them, in order to strengthen themselves still more, by persuading Thurlow to be again chancellor, and Mr. Pitt, whose personal popularity and family weight with the nation are very desirable for them, is tempted with the place of chancellor of the exchequer, which Lord John Cavendish, from mere aversion to business, wishes to resign.

While they are using such means to augment their strength, they are manifestly intimidated at the sight of those great national objects which they know not how to manage. Ireland is still in a state of fermentation, throwing off the admiralty, post-office, and every other relic of British parliamentary authority, and contending for a free importation of their woolen manufactures into Portugal, for the trade to the East Indies, to the United States of America, and all the rest of the world, in as ample manner as the English enjoy these blessings. The Irish volunteers are also contending for a parliamentary reform, and a more equal representation in their house of commons, and are assembling, by their delegates, in a congress at Dublin, to accomplish it. This rivalry of Ireland is terrible to the ministry; they are supposed to be at work to sow jealousies and divisions between the Protestants and Catholics in Ireland.

The East Indies exhibit another scene which will be formidable to the ministers. Here centre the hopes of England; and it is certain that no system can be pursued which will give universal satisfaction. Some require the government to take that whole country into their own hands; others demand aids in cash, and troops to the company. Opposition will be first formed probably upon Indian affairs.

Public credit is the greatest object of all. The necessary annual expense, comprehending the interest of the whole national debt, funded and unfunded, and the peace establishment, will amount to near seventeen millions. The annual receipts of taxes have never yet amounted to thirteen millions. Here will be a deficiency, then, of near four millions a year, which will render an annual loan necessary, until the debt will be so increased, and the stocks so sunk, that no man will lend his money. The judicious will call upon ministers for a remedy, and will embarrass them with their reproaches; but the stockjobbers are

more numerous than the judicious, and more noisy. These live upon loans, and as long as ministers borrow twelve millions a year, and employ the stockjobbers to raise it, however certainly the measure tends to ruin, their clamors will be for ministers. An enormous loan is the most popular thing a statesman can undertake; so certain is the bankruptcy of this country! Opposition will declaim upon this topic, but will make no impression.

The United States of America are another object of debate. If an opposition should be formed and concerted, I presume that one fundamental of it will be a liberal conduct towards us. They will be very profuse in professions of respect and esteem and affection for us; will pretend to wish for measures which may throw a veil over the past, and restore, as much as possible, the ancient good will. They will be advocates for some freedom of communication with the West Indies, and for our having an equitable share of that carrying trade, &c. Administration, on the other hand, I am confident, will with great difficulty be persuaded to abandon the mean, contemptible policy which their proclamations exhibit.

In my humble opinion, the only suitable place for us to negotiate the treaty in, is London. Here, with the most perfect politeness to the ministry, we may keep them in awe. A visit to a distinguished member of the opposition, even if nothing should be said at it about public affairs, would have more weight with ministers than all our arguments. Mr. Jay is, I believe, of the same opinion. But we shall not conduct the negotiation here, unless Dr. Franklin should come over. Indeed, if congress should join us in a commission to treat with other powers, in my opinion, we might conduct the business better here than in Paris. I shall, however, cheerfully conform to the sentiments of my colleagues. The delay of the commission is to me a great embarrassment; I know not whether to stay here, return to Paris or the Hague; I hope every moment to receive advices from congress which will resolve me.

I received yesterday a letter from Mr. Hartley, with the compliments of Mr. Fox, and that he should be glad to see me, proposing the hour of eleven to-day, which I agreed to. Mr. Jay saw him one day this week. Mr. Jay made him and the

Duke of Portland a visit on his first arrival; they were not at home. But he never heard from them until my arrival, ten days or a fortnight after. Informed of this, I concluded not to visit them, and did not; but after a very long time, and, indeed, after Mr. Hartley's return from Bath, messages have been sent to Mr. Jay and me, that Mr. Fox would be glad to see us. It is merely for form, and to prevent a cry against him in parliament for not having seen us, for not one word was said to Mr. Jay of public affairs, nor will a word be said to me.

The real friendship of America seems to me the only thing which can redeem this country from total destruction. There are a few who think so here, and but a few, and the present ministers are not among them; or at least, if they are of this opinion, they conceal it, and behave as if they thought America of small importance. The consequence will be, that little jealousies and rivalries and resentments will be indulged, which will do essential injury to this country as they happen, and they will end in another war, in which will be torn from this island all her possessions in Canada, Nova Scotia, and the East and West Indies. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 2 December, 1783.

Sir, — The relation in which we have the honor to stand with your Excellency, concerning the American loan, makes it our duty to inform your Excellency of the following circumstances.

We received, some time since, a letter from Mr. Morris, dated 5th August, by which he advised us, that he had determined to value upon us by his drafts till the amount of half a million florins. We calculated, at that time, that the balance we had in hands, with the net proceeds of the cargo of tobacco of the ship Sally, would not be sufficient to pay those drafts; and that in case we should have no opportunity to sell one or two hundred bonds at least, we were exposed to a disbursement of about the amount of that value. Notwithstanding this, we took the resolution to honor the mentioned drafts, and determined that we should advance the deficient money, if, at the time of their pay-

ment, we should not have so much cash. We did not hesitate to give assurances of this in our answer to Mr. Morris, exposing, however, at the same time, the very disagreeable circumstances in the business of the loan. This our letter to Mr. Morris was dated 11 July, and we hope he will have received the same speedily. Our next and following letters were no less discouraging, because, notwithstanding our repeated endeavors, we could not make an engagement, nor dispose of any quantity of bonds.

When this happened in Europe, Mr. Morris must, at the same time, have been in the best expectation about the business, since he advises us by his letter of the 1st October that he was informed (though through an indirect channel) that your Excellency's journey to Holland had given a new spring to the American credit, and that the loan was going on well. This being the case, he determined to value on us to the amount of half a million more, which, together with the other half million, makes a whole million of florins, for payment of which we have only in cash (the net proceeds of the sold tobacco included) near four hundred thousand florins.

We received this advice last Sunday, and assembled in the afternoon to agree with one another what we should do in those circumstances. We were very much mortified about it, apprehending that those drafts might soon be offered for acceptance, and knowing the very little appearance, or almost impossibility, of a better success in the loan, within the time when the drafts will become due. And we are sorry to inform your Excellency that our apprehensions were but too well founded, since already, the next day, about two hundred thousand florins were offered.

In this disagreeable position, we determined to send immediately an express to his Excellency B. Franklin, at Paris, with a letter, whereby we informed him of what was going on, and desired that he should inform, whether perhaps M. Grand had a balance in favor of the United States, and that he should order that balance kept at our disposal. But if there should be no balance in the hands of M. Grand, or if the balance should not be of such a large sum, then we desired that Mr. Franklin should give his ministerial word to provide us, or to do honor to our drafts to the amount of, half a million of florins, in case we

should come into the necessity to make use of such an operation, which will very likely, or almost certainly, be unavoidable. The express went the same evening, and we take the liberty to send your Excellency here inclosed a copy of our letter to Mr. Franklin for your perusal.

We are very sorry that Mr. Morris gives so much credit to an indirect advice, the authenticity of which we are ignorant of, because it is certain that thereby he exposes the whole American credit in Europe. For in case the answer of Mr. Franklin should not be quite satisfactory, and that, by consequence, we should be put to the necessity of declining the acceptance of the drafts, we fear it will cause a great cry and give a discredit to America. We hope it will not happen; and that in the mean time your Excellency and congress will look upon our offer to Mr. Franklin to honor Mr. Morris's drafts upon his promise and guaranty, and also upon the expediting of the express, as proofs of our zeal and endeavors to remove every thing that might do any mischief to the American credit.

We have the honor to remain, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

P. S. After having written our letter to your Excellency, the greatest part of the holders of Mr. Morris's drafts, being Jews, whom it doth not suit to wait for the acceptance of their remittances, have determined to make them protested, which we could not prevent. We have given for answer, that we had not received the advice, and that we desired the bills should be offered again for payment when due, which we thought to be the best answer to preserve the credit of the drafts as much as we possibly could. The amount of those protested bills is about one hundred and seventy thousand florins.

We are sorry to observe a second time, that Mr. Morris promised not to distribute his drafts till some time after the advice, and that, a few days after, they come up. The first time was by his letter of 5 August, when he had determined to draw two hundred thousand florins, or perhaps till five hundred thousand, but he would only dispose of the bills as occasion might require, which must have been soon after, as we observed by the appear-

ance of the bills. Now, by his letter of 1 October, the bills for the amount of the second half million of that date were lying in his hands to be disposed of during that month and the succeeding, or even perhaps in December, and by the numbers of the bills we presume that almost the whole sum must have been disposed of before the 26 of October, which, as far as we know, is the date of the last letters from Philadelphia. This is very disagreeable to us, and it seems but reasonable, that Mr. Morris should have waited some time longer, after his advice, with the distribution of his drafts, by which means it might have been possible to make some arrangement here in Europe, and to prevent the misfortune to which he has now exposed his drafts. We have again the honor, &c.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

London, 5 December, 1783.

Sir, — Commodore Jones is just arrived from Philadelphia with despatches. Those directed to the ministers I opened. One contained nothing but newspapers and proclamations. The other contained a letter "to the commissioners" and a set of instructions. The letter bears date the 1st of November; the instructions, the 29th of October. A remaining packet is directed to you alone, but probably contains a commission to us all to treat of commerce with Great Britain.

Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens are at Bath, and the bearer is inclined to go on to Paris. I shall send on the despatches, and depend upon your sending us the earliest intelligence, if you find a commission, in the packet to you, in pursuance of the resolution of the 1st of May last, because that parliament must do something before they rise respecting the trade, and their proceedings may probably be somewhat the less evil for knowing beforehand that there is in Europe a power to treat.

I shall wait with some impatience to hear from you, because, if there is no commission under cover to you, in which I am named, I shall go to the Hague, and there take up my abode for some time. I have just received a letter from Willink & Co., which shows that money is exhausted, and credit too. He

incloses me his letter to you, but I fear you will not be able to assist him.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN JAY.

London, 7 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR, — The night before last, Commodore Jones arrived with despatches from congress. Two packets were directed to "the ministers," and one larger one to Dr. Franklin. The two first I opened; one of them contained nothing but newspapers, the other contained a private letter from the president, and a set of instructions to the ministers for peace. These I copied, and sent on the originals to Passy, together with the packet to Franklin unopened. If it is found to contain a commission to us in conformity to the resolution of the 1st of last May, the Doctor will inform us by the first post, if not by express.

In the mean time, I wish to consult with you, if it were possible, upon our new instructions, which chalk out some new business for us. I would send you a copy of them, if I were not afraid of ministerial curiosity. Mr. Bingham makes me think you will soon be here.

I inclose herewith a letter from the president to you, and another to Mr. Laurens, which I must beg the favor of you to deliver to him, as I do not know his address.

Mifflin is the new president, and congress have adjourned to Annapolis, and are to sit, after some time, one year at Georgetown on Potomac, and one year on the Delaware. Colonel Ogden had arrived with the news of the signature of the definitive treaty, but Thaxter had not in the first week in November.

Barney's destination is Havre-de-Grace, and his orders are positive to sail in three weeks for Philadelphia.

Mr. Morris has drawn so many bills upon my bankers in Amsterdam, that a number have been protested for non-acceptance; so that if Mr. Grand cannot assist in preventing the protest for non-payment, the catastrophe must now come on. This you will not mention at present.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

London, 14 December, 1783.

Gentlemen, — I have received your letter of the 2d of December, and am extremely sorry to learn that a number of Mr. Morris's bills have been protested.

You did very prudently in writing immediately to Mr. Franklin, to inquire if M. Grand could afford you any assistance. I hope you have received a favorable answer. I am waiting for answers from Mr. Franklin to letters written to him, to determine whether I am to return to Paris or the Hague. But I do not know that I could be of any service to you, if I were in Holland. With much esteem, &c.

John Adams.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 23 December, 1783.

Sir, — We do ourselves the honor, in answer to your Excellency's esteemed favor of 14 December, to hand you copies inclosed of the letters both of Dr. Franklin and M. Grand, by which you will be pleased to observe that the contents are by no means favorable to our purpose.

By the Washington packet, we have again been favored with his Excellency Robert Morris's letters, with advice of new drafts to the amount of seven hundred and fifty thousand florins, which is nothing less than an augmentation of the difficulties we labor under to dispose the undertakers and money-lenders to take obligations, which is all to no purpose, since they seem informed that the Emperor and Russia, after the example of Sweden, will augment the interest; which expedient France actually sets on foot with its loan to open in January, of one hundred million of livres. This has already induced us to offer them some higher premium, to which we thought ourselves fully authorized by the circumstances and the drafts of Mr. Morris. To prevent their being protested (when due) for non-payment, which his Excellency writes us to prevent at all events, we have taken into consideration, whether it was not proper to apply to the regency of our city to obtain for

the undertakers some facilities, by which means we might move them to take obligations enough to enable us to do due honor to all the drafts of the superintendent of finance. We are, therefore, sorry to see your Excellency is uncertain whether you will come to Holland, since we suppose that a proper application made in your especial quality to our regency might prove not unsuccessful.

However, as no time can be lost, to leave space to our regency for deliberating on this subject, and to have their resolution before the bills become due, we take the liberty to pray your Excellency, in case you are not to come here very soon, to favor us with a letter in your public capacity, for our pensionary, Van Berckel, by which you pray him to dispose favorably of the request we present to the regency, to promote the course of the loan, which condescension will be looked upon by congress as a real proof of our city of their friendship to the United States, who will not fail to put the right value on the same.

If this expedient should not prove successful by this application to the magistrate, there remains one way left, and the only one; that your Excellency be pleased to authorize us to make a new loan of four millions of florins, of which the interest comes out to six per cent. per annum, in which case we should not be destitute of hopes of succeeding. But, without doubt, we fear to be obliged to allow to the undertakers some more premium, which we shall not do, except from the greatest necessity, and with particular economy.

And as Mr. Morris mentions to us that he pays said interest in America, we venture to suppose that he can have no objection to allow us the same here; and the more, as not only all his drafts would be honored by it, and a considerable sum over become at his disposal, whilst there is no prejudice to credit in augmenting the interest. This is only following the example other powers have given, and to which our state, admiralties, East India Company will be obliged to come, to find money for the large loans they stand in need to make. Hence we conclude that those powers who resolve the first to augment the interest will succeed, and leave it very uncertain for those who follow to be equally happy.

In case your Excellency approve of our ideas, and judge it proper to send us at all events an authorization, we pray to add

an assurance to it, that the loan done in consequence will be duly approved and ratified by congress. We shall inform his Excellency Mr. Morris, of this our application to your Excellency, and hope to convince hereby both you and him of our uninterrupted endeavors for the interest of congress.

We have the honor to be, &c.

WILHEM AND JAN WILLINK,
NIC. AND JACOB VAN STAPHORST,
DE LA LANDE AND FYNJE.

MESSRS. VAN STAPHORST TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 26 December, 1783.

SIR, — At the beginning of this week, having many letters to despatch relating to the business of the United States, we agreed together upon their contents, and every one of us charged himself with part of the work. Mr. Willink promised to write a letter to your Excellency, and a short time before the departure of the mail, he sent it to the other houses for signing. We observed, he had not been very fortunate in the expression of our common ideas; however, there being no time for composing another letter, we put our names under his composition.

But, being in doubt whether your Excellency will sufficiently understand the meaning, and the matter being very interesting for the United States, we hope your Excellency will excuse us if we endeavor to supply the defect of that letter. If the matter was of less importance, we would not do it, for reasons which will be very apparent to your Excellency; but we presume that those reasons ought to be postponed, when there is danger that, by too much delicacy, the interests of the United States might suffer. We venture this step without the knowledge of our companions, in the intent only to serve your Excellency; we depend, therefore, upon your friendship, that you will do us the favor not to mention any thing about this address in your letters to the three houses.

Your Excellency is informed, that, by the present situation concerning the loan, and the dispositions of the treasurer, we have been in the very disagreeable necessity to decline the acceptance of half a million guilders, and again of seven hun-

dred and fifty thousand guilders. We are informed, that if the last mentioned sum should return through want of payment, congress is not to pay any charges upon the return, in consequence of an agreement made with the houses who took the bills. But we presume, that, notwithstanding this, it will be a great advantage to the States, if we are able to pay them; and we know that the expenses attending the return of the half million, and the disappointment resulting from it, will be of such consequences, that we do not doubt but we are not only authorized to exert our utmost endeavors to dispose of a quantity of bonds, but even to allow some more remedium to the undertakers than we stipulated at the beginning with your Excellency. It is almost impossible at this time to obtain an engagement with these gentlemen, unless we should make such stipulations, which, however, we look upon as very prejudicial.

Considering this, and besides, that the not paying of the drafts would occasion a stagnation of commerce in the spring, because several bills are remitted to certain people, who are to send out goods for their amount, we thought it merited the attention of our government, and we have therefore mentioned the matter to a couple of very patriotic members of our magistracy, and desired their assistance for such encouragements as might facilitate the business. We had the satisfaction to find that they were fully convinced of the fatal consequences of the return of the bills, and that they promised to assist us in a further application, which, on this assurance, we have determined to make. We are in hopes it will be effectual, but we believe, at the same time, that your Excellency being present and approving of our idea, would give a great weight to our address; and, therefore, we should wish that, in case your other important business would permit that step, your Excellency would make a trip to this country. However, considering the present season, and that perhaps other important things concerning the United States may make it impossible for your Excellency to comply with our desire, we request you will write a letter to M. Van Berckel, Pensionary of this city, to recommend the business, and we have reason to think this will do very well.

Mr. Willink has added another scheme of a new loan for four millions at six per cent. It is true that the interests of loans

are rather augmented since the time you opened the loan for the United States, and we do not decline that plan, in case we should have the misfortune of a disappointment from the magistracy. However, we, for our private opinion, should prefer first to complete the former loan at five per cent. Besides, we think it necessary to inform your Excellency, that whenever you shall give the preference to this scheme, and authorize us to put it in execution, it will not be done without granting a remedium to the undertakers.

We have the honor to be, &c.

Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

The Hague, 24 January, 1784.

Sir, — Desirous of doing all in my power to save Mr. Morris's bills, I determined to go to Amsterdam, and accordingly set off the beginning of this month from London in a season too rigorous for pleasure. At Harwich we were obliged to wait several days for fair weather, which, when it arrived, brought us little comfort, as it was very cold, and the wind exactly against us. The packets were obliged to put to sea, and I embarked in one of them. We were more than three days in advancing thirty-three leagues, with so unsteady a course, and such a tossing vessel, that we could not keep a fire, the weather very cold, and the passengers all very sea-sick. As we could not, on account of the great quantities of ice upon the coast, reach Helvoet, we were put on shore on the island of Goree, whence we got a boor's wagon to carry our baggage, and we walked about six miles to the town of Goree; not finding ice-boats here, we were obliged to go in open boors' wagons across the island to Midel-Harnis. Here we were detained several days in very bad lodgings, unable to find boats to carry us over the arm of the sea to Helvoet. At length ice-boats appeared, and we embarked amidst a waste of ice which passed in and out every day with the tide; and, by the force of oars and boat-hooks, sometimes rowing in the water, and sometimes dragging on the ice, which would now and then break and let us down, in the course of the day we got over; and we thought ourselves

lucky, as the last boat which passed got stuck in the ice, and was carried out with the tide and brought in again, so that it was out from nine in the morning to one o'clock the next night before it reached the opposite shore. We could not reach Helvoet, but landed on the dike about two miles from it, and took boors' wagons again for the Brille, which we reached at night. Next morning, we took ice-boats again to cross another water obstructed by ice as before, and then a third, the Maese, which we found sufficiently frozen to walk over. Another boor's wagon carried us to Delft, and from thence a coach to the Hague. After the rest of a day or two, I went to Amsterdam. Our bankers had applied to the regency, and I offered to enter into any reasonable contract, and to pledge the faith of the United States for the performance of it. But all in vain. The gentlemen of the regency seemed very desirous of doing something for us, if they could. But, as usual, they are so afraid of making a precedent, and that other powers, as much distressed for money as we, should take advantage and demand the same favor, that they dare not; and our bankers were advised to take back their application, to avoid a certain decision against us. Yesterday, I returned to the Hague.

I should look back with less chagrin upon the disagreeable passage from London, if we had succeeded in obtaining the object of it; but I find I am here only to be a witness that American credit in this Republic is dead never to rise again, at least until the United States shall all agree upon some plan of revenue, and make it certain that interest and principal will be paid. There has scarce an obligation been sold since the news of the mutiny of soldiers in Philadelphia, and the diversity of sentiments among the States about the plan of impost.

I have no information from congress or Mr. Morris, but I am told by our bankers there are bills to the amount of thirteen hundred thousand guilders, which must be sent back; a terrible disappointment to great numbers of people! Some of the bills become payable the beginning of March, and the rest, being much the greatest part, in May.

At Amsterdam, I received the honor of yours of 3d of this month.

John Adams.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

The Hague, 29 January, 1784.

Gentlemen, — When I left Amsterdam, I despaired of doing any thing to prevent the bills of exchange from being sent back. It is possible, however, that something may have since happened to give us better hopes. I should be obliged to you, if you would inform me, whether there is yet any ground to expect aid from the venerable regency of your city or not. The commerce of the city is much interested in it, and the city has a right to do what it will with its own; and, therefore, no other power can take advantage of the precedent, since we are not demanding a right, but requesting a favor. Surely, if the city sees, that, without hurting itself, it can confer a favor on a friend, and thereby greatly promote its own commerce, it has a right to do it, without fearing that other powers differently circumstanced should claim a like indulgence.

Since my return to the Hague, I have reflected, as maturely as I can, upon the proposition of a new loan on a different plan, suggested in one of your letters to me in London. It would be with great reluctance that I should consent to raise the interest, but yet I would do it, rather than the bills should go back. I therefore request of you, gentlemen, to consider of this matter, and consult with the undertakers, and if you can be sure of obtaining the cash to save the bills, by a new plan, I would agree to it. But yet I could not, I think, go beyond six per cent., including your commissions, the two per cent. to the undertakers, and, in short, including interest and all charges.

It is neither your fault nor mine, if we cannot succeed, yet I should wish to do every thing in our power, and I request your sentiments upon the subject. It would be imprudent to talk of a new plan, if we were not previously certain of success in obtaining the money.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 31 January, 1784.

Sir, — We are favored with the honor of your Excellency's letter of the 29th of this month, which should have appeared yesterday with us.

Mr. W. Willink did himself the honor to wait on your Excellency the night before your departure, to inform you of the unsuccessfulness of all our repeated endeavors. Notwithstanding the favorable dispositions of our regency, considerations of so much importance with them opposed their good intentions, that they could not be prevailed upon to dispose favorably of our request.

We have, however, not been quiet since, but are daily occupied in conference with the undertakers, and offer them an extraordinary premium on the remainder of the two millions. As they will meet with us Monday morning to make some demands, we should wish to receive in answer to this your Excellency's orders, as to whether we should conclude with them in case we could succeed, by a sacrifice of four to five per cent. on that amount, for all the extraordinary gratifications and allowances. We suppose this course preferable in this juncture to an attempt to negotiate a new loan against six per cent. interest, which last, however, your Excellency seems to consider (as we surely have always done) preferable to the return of the bills. Should we, however, after receiving your Excellency's authority for the first mentioned proposals, not succeed with them, it would be well that you consent to our consulting with the undertakers about a new loan, with whom we shall by no means do any thing except on security of getting the money.

But we wish to observe to your Excellency, that the interest of six per cent. is in favor of the money-lenders, and can by no means bear the charges on the loan; and not only these must be paid, besides the interest, but we are in real apprehension, that, instead of being four and a half per cent. in all, they would, by reason of this juncture of time, amount to six per cent. altogether, to which it would be necessary to submit. Hence we should rather allow the extraordinary premium of four to five per cent. on the remaining obligations in our hands; but we

submit, with respect, our judgment to your Excellency's more enlightened understanding.

We press the undertakers the more seriously, because we have got information that the Bank of Philadelphia stopped payment on account of false bank notes put in circulation, which circumstance occasioned confusion there; and if it should become public before we are able to conclude the matter, we are really fearful all our endeavors will entirely miscarry. We therefore consider, on account of this fatal event, the sooner we can conclude, the better, without standing on a trifle of a per cent., more or less. All which we submit to your Excellency's consideration, and beg the favor of your advice, if any thing of this circumstance should be known to you, as we may yet doubt the correctness of this advice, dated 9 December.

We have the honor, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

The Hague, 1 February, 1784.

Gentlemen, — I have just received your favor of yesterday, and thank you for the promptitude with which you answered mine of the 29th ult.

I have been informed particularly by the two worthy pensionaries, Van Berckel and Visscher, as well as by your letter, of the difficulties of succeeding with your venerable regency, and, therefore, see no hopes of saving the bills, but in the plan of a new loan, or in that which you propose, which, I fully agree with you, is much better for many reasons.

Your judgment in these things is much better than mine, and, therefore, if we cannot do better, in your opinion, I will agree with you to the sacrifice of four to five per cent., for all the extraordinary gratifications and allowances.

I have not yet received from any quarter, before I received your letter, the least intimation that the Bank of Philadelphia had stopped payment on account of false notes in circulation. And I cannot credit such a report, because, if it were true, it

would have been most industriously spread in Europe, with all its details and evidence, by the many enemies we have among the stockjobbers in England and elsewhere.

With esteem, &c.

John Adams.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 4 February, 1784.

Sir, — We have received your Excellency's esteemed favor of 1st February, by which we see you are pleased to consent to an extraordinary sacrifice, on which we pleaded with the undertakers, but could by no means prevail on them; and at last they declared against it finally. These displeasing circumstances brought us into the necessity to take their opinions on a new loan against six per cent. interest, as your Excellency judged perfectly right, that it was much preferable to do it, than to get the bills protested. We, in consequence, have proposed to them the inclosed scheme, on which, Sunday or Monday next, they jointly have promised an answer. In case we can offer to them a reasonable premium and gratification, some of them seem inclined to hearken to the proposal; and we stipulate the ready payment of so many hundred thousand guilders this month, that the bills falling due at the end, to such an amount, should all be paid. We want, therefore, to pray your Excellency to authorize us to conclude, on this footing, with six per cent. allowance for all the premiums, brokerage, gratifications, notary seals, obligations, commission, and every expense besides. In case we can be happy enough to bring it to consistency, we shall directly draw up the obligation for your Excellency to sign, and direct further matters in the most regular way and order.[1]

Desiring your answer hereon for our government,

We remain, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

[1] Some alterations in these letters of gentlemen unacquainted with English idioms, are occasionally necessary to express the sense, awkwardly at best.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

The Hague, 5 February, 1784.

Gentlemen, — I have received your favor of the 4th, and considered its contents. I am very sorry to find there is no hope of obtaining the money upon the old obligations, with an additional gratification. The credit of the United States must be very low indeed, in this Republic, if we must agree to terms so exorbitant as those in the plan you have inclosed to me, in order to obtain about two hundred thousand pounds sterling. The news of it will cause such an alarm, and give such disgust in America, that the effect of it will be positive orders to borrow no more. This, indeed, would be no evil in America. However, since the bills are drawn, to avoid the mischiefs which would follow the final protest of them, I will agree to the new plan you propose, provided you cannot obtain the money upon more moderate and reasonable terms. But I must entreat you, gentlemen, to use your utmost endeavors to obtain some diminution of the gratification, if it is possible. I am well persuaded of your disposition to do this business as advantageously for the United States as you can, and, therefore, it is unnecessary for me to use any arguments with you upon the occasion.

I beg leave to recommend to you, that the subscription should be opened at only one house, Messrs. Willink's, for example, as this method is more convenient for the subscribers, and not less beneficial for the other houses.

You will be pleased to make it an indispensable condition, that the money be furnished for the payment of all the bills, for I am determined, if any of them go back protested, they shall all share the same fate. With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 5 February, 1784.

Sir, — I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 24th past. You have had a terrible passage indeed, taking it altogether, from London to Amsterdam. The season

has been, and continues uncommonly severe, and you must have suffered much. It is a pity that the good purpose of your voyage, to save, if possible, the credit of Mr. Morris's bills, could not be accomplished by your obtaining a loan from the regency. I do not wonder at their declining it, nor at the stop you mention as put to the general loan by the news of the diversity of sentiments among the States about the plan of impost. I hope these mischievous events will at length convince our people of the truth of what I long since wrote to them, that *the foundation of credit abroad must be laid at home.* When the States have not faith enough in a congress of their own choosing to trust it with money for the payment of their common debt, how can they expect that that congress should meet with credit, when it wants to borrow more money for their use from strangers?

Your Excellency saw in England the instructions brought to us by Captain Jones from the congress, and which you forwarded to me. Expecting your and Mr. Jay's speedy return hither, I took no step in consequence of them. Mr. Jay is now returned. And we are both desirous of knowing whether it is your intention to join us again here, in order to execute these instructions; because, in that case, we should wait your arrival.

I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 10 February, 1784.

Sir, — I had scarcely finished my despatches to go by Mr. Thaxter with the definitive treaty, when I was taken down with a fever at Paris, and reduced so low as to be totally unable to attend to any business for a long time. When I grew so much better as to be able to ride, I was advised to go to England. As I had nothing to do at Paris, and an attempt to reside in Holland would probably have thrown me into a relapse, I took the advice, and after a few weeks of gentle exercise and relaxation from care, with a change of air and of diet, I found myself so much better as to venture over to Holland, though in a very rigorous season, to see if I could do any thing to save the public credit. I have done my utmost to no pur-

pose. Mr. Van Berckel and Mr. Visscher, who are very well disposed to serve us, have frankly told me that there was no hope of obtaining the least assistance from the regency. I went to Amsterdam, and spent eight or ten days there, but could do nothing. The bills of exchange must, for any thing I see, go back, and the credit of the United States will never revive, until they have established a certain revenue for the payment of interest.

A long course of journeys and voyages, a variety of climates, and continued application of mind have so wrecked my constitution, which was never very firm, and produced these repeated attacks of the fever, that it is high time for me to take a little repose; and as Mr. Jay will be with Dr. Franklin, at Paris, it will be unnecessary for me to go thither to execute the last instructions of congress, and I shall accordingly remain here until further orders.

Peace is made between Russia and the Porte, and the definitive treaty between England and Holland is expected to be soon signed. May the world continue at peace! But if it should not, I hope we shall have wisdom enough to keep ourselves out of any broil. As I am quite in sentiment with the Baron de Nolken, the Swedish ambassador at St. James's, who did me the honor to visit me, although I had not visited him. "Sir," said he, "I take it for granted, that you will have sense enough to see us in Europe cut each other's throats with a philosophical tranquillity." This minister requested Governor Pownall to introduce him to me. He did so. The ambassador told me he had been twenty years at that Court, and had seen the rise, progress, and end of the dispute with America; that he had lived much with the British ministers, and had often ventured to give them his sentiments; that he had constantly foretold the issue; "but," said he, "although I was upon good terms with them, they had no confidence in me; and in this they were right; for no court ought ever to have confidence in a foreign minister." I mention this, because it is a maxim with all old nations, and I think it high time it should become the maxim of our young one.

Governor Pownall told me that he meditated a voyage to America, but was afraid of jealousies and suspicions, and asked if I thought he might be well received. I told him I did

not doubt he would be received respectfully in every part of America; that he had always been considered, so far as I knew, as friendly to America, and that his writings had been useful to our cause. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

The Hague, 11 February, 1784.

SIR, — Last night I received your obliging favor of the 5th of this month.

Your Excellency's sentiment, "that the foundation of credit abroad must be laid at home," is perfectly just, and accords with the general sentiment of the money-lenders, undertakers, and brokers in this country, whose universal cry is, "we should choose to see some certain method agreed on and established for the payment of interest, before we adventure farther in the American loan."

I am glad to hear of Mr. Jay's safe return to Paris, and hope his health is confirmed. As the instructions may be executed by any one or more of the ministers for the peace, residing at the Court of Versailles, it seems to me to be more for the benefit of the public service, that I should remain here for some time, rather than go to Paris. I have not given over all endeavors to obtain the money for the bills, although the best friends we have inform me there is no hope at all from the public. We are endeavoring to discover, if it is possible, by any new plan of a loan, to obtain the money of the undertakers. Yet, by all I can learn, I despair of obtaining it, without agreeing to terms so disadvantageous as to be little better than the final protest of the bills. Indeed, it is still improbable, that I can obtain it, upon any terms at all. Money is scarce, as well as our credit feeble. The loan of the East India Company, warranted by the states of Holland, does not fill; a case unknown in this country.

Your Excellency, with Mr. Jay, may proceed to execute these instructions without me; and I hereby entreat that you would, without waiting at all for me. It is not likely there will be any difference of opinion between your Excellencies, concerning any

of those instructions, in which case alone it would be necessary for me to attend, if Mr. Laurens does not.

It is probable we may soon learn something from congress, in answer to our letter with the definitive treaty, which will determine whether it is necessary I should join you at Paris or not. It would be very inconvenient to me, in the present tender state of my health, to make a journey to Paris without a necessity, at least until this formidable winter breaks up, although I should be ambitious enough of the honor of joining in the execution of those orders.

I wish your Excellencies a happy year, and much pleasure in the enjoyment of peace, as well as success in your negotiations, whether joined or not by your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN JAY.

The Hague, 13 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR, — I have received a letter from Mr. Gerry, at Philadelphia, 23 November. Thaxter arrived there the night before. I presume he has written by Mr. Reed, and that his letter is gone to you, as he probably addressed his letter to us all.

Mr. Morris has drawn afresh by this vessel. Let me beg of you and the Doctor to advise him to stop his hand. If I can possibly save those already drawn, which, however, I still despair of, it will be upon terms so enormously avaricious, that it will raise a tremendous clamor in America. It is ruinous to borrow money in Europe upon such terms, but it will be more ruinous to let the bills go back.

My situation is very disagreeable. It is not for me to judge of the propriety of the drafts. I am only in a ministerial capacity, and ought to procure the money, if possible, upon any terms within my instructions, but to be obliged to go to the utmost extent of them, when I know that such numbers will blame me for it, because they will not believe the necessity of it, is unpleasant.

There is a despotism in this country, in the government of loans, as absolute as that of the grand signior; five or six peo-

ple have all the money under their command, and they are as avaricious as any Jews in Jews' Quarter. This country revenges itself in this way, upon the powers of Europe, for the insults it receives from them in wars and negotiations.

I think I could not justify going to Paris while the fate of these bills is depending. You will be so good as to go on with the doctor in execution of the last instructions. If there is any point upon which you wish for my opinion, I will give it you with pleasure at any time by letter. Has Mr. Laurens declined acting? How is the doctor's health? And how is Mrs. Ridley?

If a commission should come to us all to treat with England, as it will be a thorny work, and likely to produce discontent and clamors, it is not my intention to withdraw my shoulders from any part of the burden. You will pardon me for suggesting, that we ought to obtain, if we can, from every power we treat with, an article that American produce imported into their ports in American bottoms, shall pay no more duties, than if imported in vessels of the subjects of those powers.

Mr. Gerry desires his respects and affections to you, in very strong and high terms; thinks the removal of congress has strengthened the Union, and that the British proclamations have had the same effect.

Will Denmark stipulate that both her islands in the West Indies shall be free ports to us? Yours, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Without Date.*)

SIR, — We have had the honor to receive your most esteemed favor of the day before yesterday, and observe with pleasure that your Excellency agrees to the alteration which we have proposed by our last in the plan of a new loan.

We had this morning a conference with the brokers, which was proposed for to have the answer of the undertakers, and in which we expected the matter should be quite regulated. But it is with a great displeasure that we were obliged to remit the conclusion till next Monday, and that we are in the necessity to

give you again such a disagreeable account. The undertakers agree with us in the opinion, that the loan will have a very good success by a public subscription, but they do not incline to run the risk of it for the whole amount. They only offer to engage to a million or something more; but we could not possibly succeed to determine them to double the sum; and because it is your absolute order, that either all the bills must be paid, or all return, we could not accept their offers; and, in case your Excellency do not incline in this situation to accommodate yourself to the circumstance, we fear all our endeavors will tend to no purpose. We feel how disagreeable it is to your Excellency, but we beg to submit to your consideration, that the engagement for a million will furnish us the money to pay the first drafts, and that we have a good prospect that the loan will be carried to the whole capital of two millions, or at least to such an amount, that, before the other drafts become due, we shall have money to pay them all. However, in case this should not answer our wishes, you will please to consider, that for a sum of seven hundred and fifty thousand guilders which were drawn at one hundred and fifty days' sight, and which by consequence must be paid in the month of May, Mr. Morris took an arrangement, that, in case they might return unpaid, congress should not pay any charges attending the return, and that, by consequence, whenever this should be the case, which we flatter ourselves will not happen, the disappointment will be less fatal.

In these circumstances, we venture to advise your Excellency to give us orders by your answer to this, that we may Monday accept the offer of the undertakers for a million, or so much more as they then will engage, and to open the loan for two millions upon the plan which you have approved, and then we will be certain to pay the first drafts, and have a good prospect likewise to pay the following, notwithstanding we have not the satisfaction to have the same certitude about it.

We beg to give us your answer upon these proposals by the morrow evening post, and have the honor to remain, very respectfully, sir, your most humble, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

The Hague, 14 February, 1784.

Gentlemen, — I have just received your letter of yesterday as I suppose, though without a date, and have maturely considered its contents. I have weighed your reasons, and considered your advice, and, upon the whole, I think it most prudent to agree upon the terms you propose, the undertakers engaging for a million; but yet I would pray you to endeavor to persuade them to engage for at least fourteen hundred thousand guilders, as this will cover all the bills already drawn, which you have received advice of. I will not insist finally, however, for more than a million, if you cannot obtain an engagement for more.

It is painful to me to agree to such high terms, I own, because I know that great numbers of people in America will blame me for it, and think that I had better have suffered the bills to go back protested. It is my duty, however, to do the best I can, and between two evils to choose the least; upon which principle it is that I agree with you in sentiment, and follow your advice upon this occasion.

With esteem, &c.

John Adams.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 28 February, 1784.

Sir, — We had the honor of receiving your favor of the 20th instant,[1] and are persuaded that the communication of the friendly disposition of his Prussian Majesty made to you by the Baron de Thulemeier will give great pleasure to congress. The respect with which the reputation of that great Prince has impressed the United States, early induced them to consider his friendship as a desirable object; and we are happy in being authorized to assure his Majesty that they will, most cheerfully, enter into such a commercial treaty with him, as being founded

[1] This letter is omitted; the same information being conveyed in almost the same language in the despatch to the president of congress of the 9th of March.

on principles of reciprocity, may be productive of equal benefits to both countries. Although we have no commission to conclude such a treaty, yet our instructions from congress enable us to join with the King's minister in preparing a draft of such treaty, which being sent to congress, they would, together with a commission to conclude the treaty, give us pointed instructions on the subject, and much time might be thereby saved. If you are of this opinion, and his Majesty should be pleased to approve such a measure, we think the articles may be discussed between you and the Baron in the first instance, on the principles which govern in the treaties you mention, both of which have been approved and ratified. That being done, we might confer together, and write a joint letter to congress on the subject; we shall, nevertheless, make this communication a part of our next despatch to congress.

We have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin,
John Jay.

MASON WEEMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Without Date.*)

Though I have not the honor of being personally acquainted with you, I flatter myself this will not be deemed an intrusion as it is a measure which necessity and the advice of my friends (Messrs. Johnson and Chase) have recommended. The particulars of my case, Mr. Johnson informs me, he communicated to you, during your short stay in London, but as I have not the vanity to imagine they were of consequence enough to merit a place among the infinitely more important matters which engage your attention, I beg leave to recapitulate them.

I am a native of America and a student of divinity; two years ago I came over to complete my studies and take orders. My first application was to the great Lowth, Bishop of London, who flatly refused because I intended to return to America, a thing unprecedented in the annals of sacred history Watson, Bishop of Landaff, gave me a gentler reception, condescended to sympathize with me on the distressed situation of

our church, and even gave me to hope that a letter from his Excellency the Governor of Maryland (my native State) would gain me admission into the sacred vineyard. His Excellency wrote me a very polite letter, which I immediately carried to the bishop. His Lordship received me very courteously, but told me that he could do nothing without the permission of the archbishop. To the archbishop I went, and have had three conferences with him on the subject, the result of which is, that his Grace, though very willing, cannot ordain me. *Parliament*, it seems, must take it in hand. A law must be passed to enable him to ordain young Americans, without putting them to the pain of swallowing the oaths of supremacy and allegiance. Thus, sir, you see the condition I am in, after a loss of time, money, and patience, sufficient to distract a stoic.

I was with Mr. Chase this morning. He thinks it probable that the bishops in Holland, Sweden, or Germany, would ordain me without requiring the oath of allegiance. *He* is of opinion I cannot take it with safety. I have no decided opinion of my *own* on the subject, but I know many ingenuous people who differ from Mr. Chase. If you will be so *very* kind as to give me *your* opinion on the subject, and to let me know by the first post or opportunity, whether I can be ordained on the continent, I will repair there immediately, and consider it as an everlasting obligation conferred on your Excellency's

Most obedient servant,

Mason Weems.

TO MASON WEEMS.

The Hague, 3 March, 1784.

Sir, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me under the cover of my friend, Mr. Johnson; and however dangerous it may be for an American minister of state to intermeddle in a matter of religion, especially without orders from his superiors, I think I can neither transgress nor give offence by rendering you any service in my power, as a private citizen, in a matter of so serious concern.

In the United Provinces of the low countries there are no diocesan bishops, nor any higher order of clergy than presbyters. The Dutch church is wholly Presbyterian, and, therefore, you

cannot obtain ordination by coming here. In Sweden and Denmark there are Lutheran bishops, but what articles of faith it may be necessary to subscribe, or what liturgy to adopt, I am not informed. I believe that consubstantiation at least, is among their creeds. By what laws or usages of their country these Protestant bishops may be bound, I know not.

His Excellency, the Baron de Nolken, Ambassador of the King of Sweden to the Court of St. James, I believe would very readily inform you; and Governor Pownall, who is well acquainted with that minister, has so much humanity and friendship for America as to introduce you to him if you desire it. I believe I may venture to give you leave to make use of my name to either of those personages. If you were here, I would introduce you to the Baron Schultz von Ascheraden, the envoy of his Swedish Majesty to their High Mightinesses; but I think it would save you the expense and trouble of travelling, to apply to the Swedish ambassador in London for information. It is a matter of importance, delicacy, and difficulty, and I should advise you to write to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay upon the subject, if you cannot obtain satisfaction in London. They may consult the Swedish and Danish ministers at Versailles. I could do the same with those of the same powers at the Hague, but as congress have joined Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself together on most of their affairs in Europe, I should not think it prudent in me to take any step but in concert with those ministers.

I think the advice of my friend, Mr. Chase, against taking the oaths of allegiance, prudent, at least until the members of the church in America shall have digested some plan for their future government. Perhaps parliament may authorize some bishop in England to ordain American candidates without administering the oaths. The Bishop of St. Asaph, I believe, would give you the best advice, and perhaps Mr. Benjamin Vaughan could procure you an introduction to his Lordship. I have not the honor to be known to his Lordship. But Mr. Vaughan, if you show him this letter, will, I flatter myself, be of service to you.

With much respect,

John Adams.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 8 March, 1784.

My Dear Sir, — Before I had a pointed reason to write, my friendship for you, and our common zeal for the public, had dictated it. But I must begin with the article that, in my mind, creates some uneasiness.

It is written from Amsterdam, that Mr. John Adams is very violent against the Society of the Cincinnati, and calls it a *French blessing;* and that he says, although I have long announced an intention to go to America, I never fulfil it, which seems to hint a want of zeal to comply with the desire of my American friends.

Was I to take the matter up as a Frenchman, I might tell you that the French Court had not, that I know of, dreamed of the Society before Count de Rochambeau was written to by General Washington. And I might add, that orders, titles, and such other foolish tokens of vanity are not more valued in France, nor even so much, as they are in Germany, Russia, Spain, and Great Britain. But, as it is as an American that I engaged, bled, negotiated, fought, and succeeded in our noble cause, I only want to mark out my conduct to you whom I esteem, and whose esteem, in point of republicanism particularly, I hold in the greatest value.

The institution in itself I do not examine. It is worth paying attention to it. Should it be dangerous, it must not subsist. Should some parts be exceptionable, amendments must be made. In case it is quite harmless, the American officers might be indulged in that, as the country is not a little indebted to them. Opinions must be collected, because opinions of honest men may differ. *Lee* was the hero of some; *Washington* was mine; and so on.[1] I do not enter into the merits or demerits of the Society. I only want to acquaint you with the part I have taken.

The Society's letters, respecting the French army, were directed to their generals and admirals. The permitting of it

1 The point of this may be gathered by reference to the note in vol. iii. page 93. It is pleasant to know that this impression was acknowledged by the writer before his death to be a mistake.

has been considered at Versailles as a compliment paid to a large and meritorious body of Americans, as a badge of union between the two countries; and I had no part to act in the business. The part I acted, was, 1stly, to accept for myself, and deliver the marks of the Society to American officers pointed out by General Washington; 2dly, after it was accepted by the French officers, to deliver it to them in a polite and brotherly manner. And, when I acted so, I was led by two motives, — the one, because, independent of the affectionate and dutiful regard that binds me to our gallant, patriotic army, independent of what can be said in favor of that freemasonry of liberty, it has ever been my duty and inclination to set up in the best light every thing that is done by a body of Americans. And when wrong measures, such as are sometimes taken in county or town meetings, have been by me disputed for in foreign companies, I will be still more desirous to see a proper respect paid to the measures of such a respectable body as the American officers. My second motive is, that, independent of any propriety of the institution in itself, had I amendments to propose, it should be in America and not in Europe; and that, on the moment the Society is unpopular, a two words resolve from an assembly may entirely destroy it, when, if danger is feared, I heartily would consent to the destruction.[1]

I have not entered into the merits of the association. Your opinion and mine on the subject are not to have effect in Europe. Let us reserve it for America, where it may be of use. I only wanted my conduct not to be misrepresented to you; and as to my democratic principles, let it be remembered, that, at a time when your situation was at the worst, and my disobeying this Court might be ruinous, I went over a volunteer in the cause from which others could not recede unless they were deserters.

As to my going to America, you know I came with an intention to settle a plan of coöperation. Count de Grasse's misfortune postponed it. Negotiations came on, and you thought I should stay. Count d'Estaing was employed, and you thought I should go with him. I did not set off before the affair of the six millions was settled, as you well know. When peace was

[1] The sense of this paragraph is a little marred by the writer's struggle with a language not his own. But by a little attention it may be fully made out.

made I returned through Spain. The minister and consul wanted free ports, wished to have Lorient, and had no instructions to act officially. Instead of two that were promised, four have been given, — Dunkirk, Lorient, Bayonne, and Marseilles. That affair will be soon concluded, and, before the end of May, I shall set out for America. Many reasons of delay might be pleaded; but they did not so much weigh with me as to retard the intended visit.

This *confidential* letter I consider as a personal mark of esteem for you, and respect for your opinion. Although we have differed in a few points, our fundamental principles are the same. It is not to the great man I write, because my popularity, thank God, is established in the kind, liberal hearts of the American nation at large. It is to the honest man, because, although your opinion sometimes has seemed to me wrong, your principles have ever been right, and I greatly value your esteem.

Adieu, my dear sir. Let me hear sometimes from you, and believe me, Affectionately, yours,

LAFAYETTE.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 9 March, 1784.

SIR, — On the 18th day of February, the Baron de Thulemeier, Envoy Extraordinary to their High Mightinesses from the King of Prussia, did me the honor of a visit; but, as he found I had company, he soon took his leave, and as I accompanied him to the head of the stairs, he told me he had something to propose to me from the King, and desired to know when he might call again. I offered to return his visit at any hour he pleased. He chose to call upon me, and named eleven the next day, at which hour he came, and told me, "that the King, who honored him with a personal correspondence, and was acquainted with my character, had directed him to make me a visit, and to say to me, that, as his subjects had occasion for our tobacco and some other things, and as we had occasion for Silesia linens and some other productions of his dominions, he thought an arrangement might be made between his Crown

and the United States which would be beneficial to both;" and the Baron desired to know my sentiments of it.

I answered him, "that I was very sensible of the honor done by his Majesty, but that I had singly no authority to treat or enter into conferences, officially, upon the subject; that congress had been pleased to confer upon their ministers at the late peace, authority to enter into conferences; that I could do nothing but in concurrence with Mr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, who were at Paris; but I thought I could answer for the good dispositions of those ministers, as well as my own, for forming an arrangement between the two powers which might be beneficial to both; that I would write to those ministers an account of what had passed. He desired I would, and said he would write by the first post to the King, and inquire if his Majesty had any thing in particular to propose, would inform him of my answer, and wait his further orders, which probably he should receive as soon as I should have an answer from Paris.

I wrote the next day, and on Saturday last received an answer from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, in which they say, that they "are persuaded that the communication of the friendly disposition of his Prussian Majesty made to you by the Baron de Thulemeier will give great pleasure to congress," &c.[1]

Yesterday, meeting the Baron at Court, on occasion of the Prince of Orange's birth-day, he told me he had received another letter from the King, and would call upon me in the evening, which he did, and informed me that the King had written to him that he was collecting all necessary papers, and would soon send them to him, with his further propositions to be made to me. I showed him my letter from Paris, with which he was well satisfied.

He added, that the King had directed him to mention rice and indigo as articles in demand in his ports of Embden and Stettin; and that a large quantity of Virginia tobacco had been this year purchased in those ports for the Baltic market; and that the excellent porcelain of Saxony might be a desirable article for the Americans.

I beg leave to submit to congress, whether the model of the treaty with Holland or Sweden may not, in general, be conve-

[1] The remainder of the letter here inserted in full is omitted, as it has been printed already. See pp. 183, 184.

nient for one with Prussia; as also the propriety of sending a full power to their ministers at the late peace, or one or more of them, to conclude this business.

With a great deal of difficulty, and at a dear rate, I have at last obtained money to save Mr. Morris's bills which are payable this month, from going back. Messrs. Willink & Co. will transmit the contract for the ratification of congress. It is much to be lamented that we are obliged to agree to so high terms, but there was absolutely no other alternative but this or protesting the bills. This business has hitherto necessarily prevented me from joining my colleagues at Paris in the execution of our instructions. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 27 March, 1784.

Sir, — I have the honor to inclose copies of three notes from the Prussian minister, the Baron Thulemeier, by which congress will see that the King has agreed to take our treaty with Sweden for a model, reserving to each party the right of suggesting such alterations as shall appear to him convenient. My request to congress is, that they would be pleased to send instructions, at the same time when they send a commission, what articles of the treaty with Sweden they would have expunged, and what new ones inserted, if any. I mention the sending of a commission, because I suppose it is the intention of congress to send one. The instructions already received are not a full power under which any sovereign can conclude, nor regularly even treat; we can only confer. There will be some difficulty about the signature, since his Majesty chooses the negotiation should be conducted by M. de Thulemeier. If congress send the commission to their ministers at the late peace as they did the instructions, M. de Thulemeier must take a journey to Paris, or a majority of the American ministers must be at the Hague.

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to inform congress that I have obtained the promise of a sum sufficient upon the new loan to save the honor of the financier's bills. Although I regret the severity of the terms, they were the most moderate which

would obtain the money. I hope for the approbation of congress, and their ratification of the contract, as soon as may be. Money is really so scarce, and there are so many loans open on even higher conditions, that it will not be possible, I fear, to obtain more money here on more reasonable ones. An impost once laid on to pay the interest, whether by the authority of congress, if that should be agreed to, or by that of the several States, would soon give us better credit here. But, in order to keep up our reputation, upon which our credit depends, there should be somebody constantly residing here to publish illustrations of our affairs, and to confute the calumnies of our enemies of all denominations.

With great and sincere respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

The Hague, 28 March, 1784.

Sir, — I did not receive your letter of the 8th until the day before yesterday. That I have not seen with pleasure, approbation, or indifference, the introduction into America of so great an innovation as an order of chivalry, or any thing like one, or that has a tendency to one, is very true. That I have been violent against it, is not so. I am not a violent man. I have disapproved of this measure with as much tranquillity and self-recollection, and phlegm, if you will, as if I had been a native, full-blooded Dutchman. It is not more than two or three times that I have had occasion to say any thing about it, and then it was not I who introduced the subject, and I said very little.

It is not my intention to discuss the question. It is too ample a field. But this is not done by the sovereigns of our country. What would be said in any nation of Europe, if a new order were instituted by private gentlemen, without consulting the sovereign? It is against our confederation, and against the constitutions of several States, as it appears to me. It is against the spirit of our governments and the genius of our people. Well may our government be weak, if the sovereign, the confederation, and constitutions are thus neglected! It has introduced, and it will, undoubtedly, introduce contests and dissensions, than which nothing is more injurious to republican States,

especially new ones. I sincerely hope our officers, whose merits no man is more willing to acknowledge and reward than I am, in any way consistent with our principles, will voluntarily, after a little reflection, lay it aside. I have written nothing to America upon the subject.

I see no motive of reason or prudence for making a mystery of our sentiments upon this subject in Europe or America, or for reserving them for America. It is a public thing, about which every man has a right to think for himself, and express his thoughts.

As to your going to America, surely I have no objection against it. Being asked whether you were going, I answered that you talked of it, but I questioned whether you would go, as the war was over, and I knew of no particular motive you might have to go. If you go, I wish you a pleasant voyage and a happy sight of your friends.

With much respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND JOHN JAY.

The Hague, 2 April, 1784.

Gentlemen, — I duly received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the subject of a treaty with Prussia, and communicated it to the Baron de Thulemeier. The King agrees to take the treaty with Sweden for a model, and if your Excellencies have any alterations to propose, I should be obliged to you for the communication of them. The Baron waits the further instructions of the King before he proposes any additions or subtractions. I should be obliged to your Excellencies for a copy of the treaty with Sweden, as I am so unlucky as not to have one here.

Inclosed is a copy of a petition to congress, transmitted me from Boston, by which it appears that the Britons in New York have condemned many vessels taken after the commencement of the armistice. This judgment seems to me to amount to this, — that a parallel of latitude is not a circle which surrounds the globe. If your opinion, gentlemen, is clear upon this head, as I doubt not it is, I think it would be a public service to write it to congress, as this will at least determine the

sufferers to pursue their rights by appeal to England. There can be no dispute about it in England, I think.

With great regard,

John Adams.

BARON DE THULEMEIER TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Translation.*)

The Hague, 9 April, 1784.

Sir, — I have the honor to send you herewith, *in the original*, the project[1] of a treaty of commerce to be concluded on between his Prussian Majesty and the United States of America, just as the King has sent it to me, requesting of you to return it to me as soon as you shall have caused it to be copied. It will be infinitely agreeable to me, sir, to conduct, in concert with you, and to the mutual satisfaction of our masters, this negotiation to the desired point. If to-morrow, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, you could grant me a moment's conversation, I shall, with great earnestness, call on you to know your sentiments.

I have added, sir, a description of Silesian linens, which hitherto have been in great demand by your countrymen; that is to say, if the Silesian merchant who furnished it to me be rightly informed. I have the honor to be, &c.

De Thulemeier.

Description of the principal articles of Silesian linens which have been sent hitherto to the United Provinces of North America by the Sieur John Godfrey Linckh, merchant and manufacturer at Hirschberg: —

1. Hamburg Lawns,
2. Long Lawns,
3. Pistol Lawns,
4. Single Silesias,
5. Tandem double Silesias,
6. Tandem quadruple Silesias,
7. Brown quadruple Silesias,
8. Estopilles Unies.

[1] The project of a treaty is omitted. It may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, the second series, vol. ii. p. 113.

TO BARON DE THULEMEIER.

The Hague, 9 April, 1784.

Monsieur le Baron, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me this morning, with the original proposition of a treaty of commerce to be concluded between his Prussian Majesty and the United States. As soon as a copy can be made, the original shall be returned. I shall be happy to have the honor of receiving you to-morrow evening, as you propose. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND JOHN JAY.

The Hague, 10 April, 1784.

Gentlemen, — Inclosed is a copy of a letter from the Baron de Thulemeier, and a copy of a project of a treaty transmitted to me by order of the King of Prussia. I should be glad if your Excellencies would examine it, and write me your objections, and proposals of alterations, which I shall immediately communicate to his Majesty through his minister. I presume, too, that your Excellencies will transmit it to congress, that when they send a commission to conclude, they may send their instructions concerning any changes to be made in the project. Your Excellencies, I flatter myself, will think with me, that we should execute the treaty in our own, as well as in the French or German language. I am, gentlemen, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 10 April, 1784.

Sir, — I have the honor to inclose to congress a copy of a letter from the Baron de Thulemeier, and a copy of a project of a treaty transmitted to me by the order of the King of Prussia. I should hope it might be examined in congress, or by a committee, and that instructions may be sent concerning any changes to be made in the articles, together with a commission to treat

and conclude, to such person or persons as congress shall please to appoint. With the greatest respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 16 April, 1784.

SIR, — We duly received (Mr. Jay and I) the letters you did us the honor of writing to us the 27th of March and the 2d instant. We shall transmit, as you desire, the recommendation of Mr. Browne to congress; and inclosed we send a copy of the treaty with Sweden.

We expect Mr. Hartley here very soon to exchange the ratifications of the definitive treaty, when we shall endeavor to obtain an explanatory article relating to the limits and term of captures. The form used in the last treaty is precisely the same that has been used in all the treaties of peace since that of Nimeguen; and I therefore imagined that cases must have arisen at the end of every war, in which it was necessary to decide on the meaning of that form of words wherein the Canary Islands are mentioned; and I desired Mr. Barclay, when he went to London, to procure from the records of the admiralty court some of those cases as decided there; but he tells me none are to be found. May there not be some in Holland? I should suppose they must have been adjudged by the parallel of latitude of those islands; and I should be glad to have such a decision to produce to Mr. Hartley.

With great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND JOHN JAY.

The Hague, 20 April, 1784.

GENTLEMEN, — I have just now received the letter which Dr. Franklin did me the honor to write me on the 16th, with the copy of the treaty with Sweden. I have before inclosed the King of Prussia's project of a treaty, prepared, as I am assured by his minister, with his own hand, in his private cabinet.

I believe it has been reserved to the present age, when the

subtleties of Aristotle and the schools are transferred from theology to politics, to discover room for a doubt in the construction of the armistice, and, therefore, we shall search in vain in any admiralty for a precedent. The words are, — "Le terme sera d'un mois depuis la manche et les mers du nord, jusqu'aux isles Canaries, inclusivement, soit dans l'océan, soit dans la Méditerranée." This limit is to extend to the southernmost point of the southernmost Canary island, from the channel. This is the extent from north to south. What is to be the extent from east to west? Is it to have none? Is it to be confined to a mathematical line, running from the middle of the channel to the remotest part of the remotest Canary? or is it to be a space as wide as the channel, running from it to that Canary? or is it to be as wide as that island? If none of these constructions have common sense in them, what can we suppose to have been the meaning of the contracting parties? They have ascertained the space very exactly from north to south, and as they have left the extent from east to west without limits, it is very clear they intended it should be unlimited, and reach all round the globe, at least where there is any ocean or mediterranean.

I have the honor, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 22 April, 1784.

SIR, — I received some time since a letter from an American gentleman, now in London, a candidate for orders, desiring to know if American candidates might have orders from Protestant bishops on the continent, and complaining that he had been refused by the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury, unless he would take the oaths of allegiance, &c.

Meeting soon afterwards the Danish minister, I had the curiosity to inquire of him, whether ordination might be had in Denmark. He answered me, that he knew not; but would soon inform himself. I heard no more of it till to-day, when the secretary of his embassy, Mr. de Rosenkrantz, made me a visit, and delivered me the papers, copies of which are inclosed.

Thus it seems, that what I meant as current conversation

only, has been made the subject of deliberation of the government of Denmark and their faculty of theology, which makes it necessary for me to transmit it to congress. I am happy to find the decision so liberal.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

(*Inclosed.*)

M. DE ST. SAPHORIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Translation.*)

The Hague, 21 April, 1784.

M. de St. Saphorin has the honor to communicate to Mr. Adams the answer he has received from his Excellency, the Count de Rosencrone, Privy Counsellor and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of his Danish Majesty, relative to what Mr. Adams desired to know. He will be happy, should this answer be agreeable to him, as well as to his superiors, and useful to his fellow-citizens. He has the honor to assure him of his respect.

de ST. SAPHORIN.

(*Extract Inclosed.*)

SIR, — "The opinion of the theological faculty having been taken on the question made to your Excellency by Mr. Adams: If the American ministers of the church of England can be consecrated here by a bishop of the Danish church? I am ordered by the King to authorize you to answer, that such an act can take place according to the Danish rites; but, for the convenience of the Americans, who are supposed not to know the Danish language, the Latin language will be made use of on the occasion. For the rest, nothing will be exacted from the candidates, but a profession conformable to the articles of the English church; omitting the oath called *test*, which prevents their being ordained by the English bishops."

TO BARON DE ST. SAPHORIN.

Mr. Adams has the honor to present his compliments to the Baron de St. Saphorin, and his sincere thanks for his note of yesterday's date, and for the copy of the despatch of his Excellency, the Count de Rosencrone, Minister of the Council of State, and Secretary of State for the Department of Foreign Affairs, of his Majesty the King of Denmark. Mr. Adams will have the honor of transmitting these papers to congress by the first opportunity, and they cannot fail to be considered in a very friendly and favorable light by a considerable number of respectable people in each of the thirteen States, who are materially interested in them. He begs M. de St. Saphorin to accept the assurances of the great respect with which he has the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 29 April, 1784.

Sir, — We received the letter you did us the honor of writing to us the 10th instant, with the project of a treaty that had been transmitted to you by the Baron de Thulemeier, which we have examined, and return herewith, having made a few small additions or changes of words to be proposed, such as *citoyens* for *sujets*, and the like, and intimated some explanations as wanted in particular paragraphs. The sooner a copy, with such of these changes as shall be agreed to by your Excellency and the Prussian minister, is forwarded to congress for their approbation, the better. With regard to the language of treaties, we are of opinion, that if the ministers of the nation we treat with insist on having the treaty in their own language, we should then insist on having it also in ours, both to be signed at the same time. This was done in our treaties with France; but if both parties agree to use a language that is particular to neither, but common to both, as the Latin or the French, as

was done in our treaty with Sweden, we then think it not necessary to have it also signed in English.

With great respect, &c.

B. Franklin,
John Jay.

TO BARON DE THULEMEIER.

The Hague, 5 May, 1784.

Monsieur le Baron, — I have the honor to inclose your project of a treaty with a few corrections and proposals of explanations made by my colleagues, Messrs. Franklin and Jay, which I have the honor to agree with them in submitting to your consideration. The alterations are soon made, and are so inconsiderable, that if you and I can arrange them, which may be done in half an hour, I will transmit the whole to congress by the earliest opportunity, as a plan approved by the ministers on both sides. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 13 May, 1784.

Sir, — Since my last arrival in Holland, I have not transmitted to congress the details of the politics of this Court and nation, nor of the neighboring Courts which are exciting disputes with it. Mr. Dumas has been in the habit and train of that history, and I have not thought fit to interrupt him; but, if I should reside here regularly, the whole business of the mission will of course go through my hands. I therefore wish to know in what light I am to consider this gentleman, and what relation he is to stand in to me. I wish it for the government of my own conduct, and still more from regard to him, whom I esteem as a very worthy man, and one who has, for a course of years, been indefatigable in the service of the United States, and who is not adequately rewarded or supported by the pittance which is allowed him. But what is more disagreeable, he has never had any character or commission from congress,

and one knows not what to call him, whether secretary or agent. I cannot ask him to act as my private secretary, which is really much beneath him, although he is ever ready to assist me in all things. I should be happy to know the pleasure of congress in this respect, and to receive their instructions from time to time in all things which relate to the United Netherlands, which I shall endeavor to execute to the best of my power.

Inclosed is another copy of the project of a treaty with Prussia, which I transmitted to Paris, to Messrs. Franklin and Jay, and have received back again from them, with their approbation, excepting the few corrections and inquiries marked upon it by those ministers. The King will send a full power, probably, to M. de Thulemeier, and I should be happy to know the pleasure of congress. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 7 June, 1784.

Sir, — Some weeks ago the Baron de Thulemeier called upon me and delivered me the paper, a copy of which is inclosed, marked 1. It is a letter written by the Envoy to the King.

Last evening the Baron called upon me again, and delivered me the answer of the King contained in the paper, a copy of which is inclosed, marked 2.

I have heretofore transmitted to congress, by different opportunities, copies of the project of a treaty, and the papers herein transmitted complete the negotiation, and the treaty is ready for signature, unless congress have other alterations to propose.

As his Majesty seems to choose that this business should be conducted by his envoy here, who is also desirous of finishing it, perhaps congress may not judge it too much complaisance, in framing their commission, to give authority to any one to conclude this treaty, in case they should name more than one, as it would be impossible for M. Thulemeier to go to Paris. It is not every ambassador, however high his rank, or numerous his titles, or magnificent his appointments, who arrives at the honor of concluding any treaty. It is a distinction which is made an object of ambition, and is much desired, so that the

Baron's inclinations, I suppose, will not be thought inexcusable.

I should hope that congress might despatch their instructions and authority to some one or more, to conclude this affair with as little delay as possible. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

OBSERVATIONS.

(*Translation.*)

1st. Instead of expressing through the course of the treaty the denomination of the United States of *North* America, simply the *United States of America.*

2d. Instead of *respective subjects*, so far as regards the United States of America, the word *citizens.*

3d. ARTICLE III. In like manner, to the *merchandises* of America, add *productions*, *manufactures*, and merchandises.

4th. ARTICLE VII. *And no one shall be molested on account of his religion, provided he submit to the public demonstrations enjoined by the laws of the country.* On this head a more explicit article is desirable, such as the fourth of the treaty concluded between the United States of America and the Republic of the United Provinces. "Entire and perfect liberty of conscience shall be granted to the subjects and inhabitants of each party and their families, and no one shall be molested on account of his religion, provided he submit, as regards the public demonstrations thereof, to the laws of the country. Liberty shall, moreover, be granted, on the death of the subjects or inhabitants of either party in the territory of the other, to inter them in the usual burial grounds, or in decent or suitable places appointed for the purpose; and the bodies of the interred shall in no wise be molested, and the two contracting powers shall provide, each within its respective jurisdiction, that the respective subjects and inhabitants may hereafter obtain the requisite certificates in case of death, when they may be interested therein."

5th. ARTICLE XV. Until the cargo has been landed in the presence of officers appointed for the purpose, and that the *opening* has been made.

N. B. Instead of opening, *inventory.*

6th. The twenty-first article may require some alteration, since it is found to be contradictory to the seventeenth article of the treaty of amity and commerce between his most Christian Majesty and the United States of America, which is expressed as follows: "And, on the contrary, no shelter or refuge shall be given in their ports or harbors to such as shall have made prizes of the subjects of his Majesty or said United States, and if they are forced to enter by distress of weather or the danger of the sea, they shall be obliged to leave it again as soon as possible." After the declaration of this article, it appears that in case of a war between Prussia and France, it would not be admissible for the United States of America to derogate from antecedent treaties concluded with the most Christian King, in favor of a more recent obligation contracted with his Prussian Majesty.

ANSWER OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

1st. May be changed without any difficulty.

2d. The same.

3d. Granted, the rather, as the general term of merchandises comprehends alike productions that grow, and manufactures.

4th. This article can be minuted as is desired in the observations.

5th. Granted.

6th. This article may be minuted in the following manner: "The armed vessels of one of the contracting parties shall not conduct the prizes they shall have taken from their enemies into the ports of the other, unless they are forced to enter therein by stress of weather or danger of the sea. In this last case, they shall not be stopped nor seized, but shall be obliged to go away as soon as possible."

ROBERT MORRIS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office of Finance, 16 June, 1784.

Dear Sir, — I have not any letters from your Excellency which are unanswered, except those of the 21st of May and

14th of September in the last year, both of which arrived very long after their dates. I have learnt from the gentlemen to whom the management of the loan in Holland was committed, the various good and ill success which they have met with. And now that I am about to leave this office, let me return to your Excellency my sincere thanks for the assistance which has at different times been derived from the exertion of your industry and talents. I pray you also to believe, that, when in private life, I shall continue to feel that esteem and respect with which I have the honor to be, sir, &c.

Robert Morris.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The Hague, 22 June, 1784.

Sir, — If my memory does not deceive me, I have heretofore transmitted to congress the advice of some of the foreign ministers here, that the United States in congress assembled should write a letter to each of the sovereigns of Europe, informing them of the complete establishment of their independence.

Lately, in separate conversations with the ministers of the two empires and the King of Sardinia, they all repeated this advice. They say that this is the rule, the practice, and that the precedents are uniform. The Empress of Russia did it lately, when she ascended the throne. They add, that this is the precise point of time, now that the ratifications of the definitive treaty of peace are exchanged, which is most proper to make the communication, and that their Courts expect it from congress.

Congress, no doubt, will write an elegant letter upon the occasion, but it would, in substance, be sufficient to say, that, on the 4th of July, 1776, they found it necessary to declare themselves a sovereign State; that they have since entered into treaties with several powers of Europe, particularly a treaty of peace with the King of Great Britain, wherein that crown has acknowledged formally and solemnly their sovereignty, and that it is their desire to live in good intelligence and correspondence with the sovereigns of Europe and of all other parts of the world, and with the one in particular, and that there may be friendship and harmony between their respective citizens

and subjects. These letters may be transmitted to all or any of your ministers in Europe, to be by them communicated through the foreign ministers at the court where they reside, or they may be transmitted directly. If congress are at a loss for the titles of any sovereign, they may leave a blank, to be filled by the minister to whom the letter is sent for communication.

The answers which will be respectively given to these letters will prevent many questions, discussions, and chicaneries, because that orders will then be given to all ambassadors, governors, generals, admirals, &c., to treat all American citizens of the United States according to their characters.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Lorient, 25 June, 1784.

My Dear Sir, — At the very instant of sailing for America, I stop to send you the new-modelled regulations of the Cincinnati. My principles ever have been against heredity, and while I was in Europe disputing about it with a few friends, my letters to the assembly, and still more particularly to the president, made them sensible of my opinion upon that matter. Until heredity was given up, I forebore mentioning in Europe what sense I had expressed. But Mr. Jay being in Paris, I once explained my conduct to him, and he appeared very well satisfied. The value I have for your esteem is the reason why I mention those particulars, and, so far as respects me, it is *for you* that I write this minute account.

Mr. Jay is named a minister for foreign affairs, with John Adams, Franklin, and Jefferson, appointed a committee to make treaties with European powers.

With every sentiment of an affectionate regard, &c.

Lafayette.

Whatever has been thought offensive, you see the Cincinnati have given it up. Now the new frame must be examined. In every circumstance, my dear sir, depend upon it, you will find me what I have ever been, and perhaps with some *éclat*, a warm friend to the army, a still warmer advocate for the cause of

liberty; but those two things, when the army is put to the proof, you will ever acknowledge to agree with each other.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

The Hague, 29 June, 1784.

Sir, — The Baron de Reishach has several times said to me that his Court expected that congress would announce formally their independence; and he has asked me if any step of that sort had been taken. That I may be able to give him an answer, I must request of your Excellency to inform me, whether you have made the annunciation directed in the first article of the instructions of the 29th of October, 1783, and what is the answer.

I have the pleasure to learn, by report only, however, that Mr. Jay is appointed minister of foreign affairs, and that Mr. Jefferson is appointed to Madrid, and that Mr. Johnson has received and transmitted to your Excellency a packet which probably contains an authentic account, as it seems to be posterior to the appointment, by being addressed only to your Excellency and to me. I should be glad to know whether there is any thing else of consequence, and whether it appears to be the design and expectation of congress that I should join you where you are. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 4 July, 1784.

Sir, — I have received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me the 29th past.

The annunciation directed by the instruction you mention, has not yet been made; some circumstances and considerations not necessary to particularize at present, occasioned the delay here; but it may now be done immediately by your Excellency, if you think proper, to the imperial minister at the Hague; or I will do it to Count Mercy, by presenting him a copy of the instruction itself.

I hope the report that Mr. Jay is appointed minister of foreign

affairs will prove true. Such an officer has long been wanted, and he will make a good one. It is said here that Mr. Jefferson was talked of to succeed me, of which I shall be glad on all accounts; but I have no letter, nor the least hint from any one of the congress relating to these matters. I wrote to you a few days since, and sent you a copy of the last despatch, and the only one I have received since January. Mr. Hartley, who has been here more than two months, is in a similar situation. He has expected instructions by every late courier to treat with us on commercial points; but they do not arrive. He thinks the delay occasioned by the report of the committee of council on the subject not having been ready to lay before parliament. The moment he is ready to treat I shall acquaint your Excellency with it; for I make no doubt of its being the design and expectation of congress that we should join in that transaction.

Montgomery of Alicant appears to have acted very imprudently in writing to Morocco, without the least authority from congress or any of their ministers. It might be well, however, to treat with that Prince, if we were provided with the proper and necessary presents; in which case, this Court would assist our negotiations, agreeable to their treaty with congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

The Hague, 27 July, 1784.

Sir, — I embrace the opportunity by Mr. Bingham, to inclose to your Excellency a copy of a letter from Mr. Jefferson, by which it appears that we are joined in some affairs which will give me the occasion to visit Paris once more, and reside there for some little time at least.

As Mr. Jefferson will not probably arrive before the latter end of August, and nothing can be done before he comes, I shall wait at the Hague for my wife and daughter, who are happily arrived in London, and endeavor to go with them in time to meet your Excellency and Mr. Jefferson upon his arrival at Paris.

The philosophers are speculating upon our constitutions, and, I hope, will throw out hints which will be of use to our coun-

trymen. The science of government, as it is founded upon the genuine principles of society, is many centuries behind that of most other sciences, that of the fine arts, as well as that of trades and manufactures. As it is the first in importance, it is to be hoped it may overtake the rest, and that mankind may find their account in it. The Berlin academician[1] has set an example, which, if liberally followed, may produce great effects; for I do not believe that many will find with him, upon examination, that despotism, or even monarchy, is the best possible form of government.

They have sent me from Amsterdam copies of a translation of the Abbé de Mably's Letters, made by an English Episcopal clergyman at Amsterdam, whom I do not know. I inclose one to your Excellency; and have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 6 August, 1784.

SIR, — Mr. Bingham sent me last night from Paris your Excellency's letter of the 27th past, inclosing a copy of one from Mr. Jefferson. I had before sent you a copy of one from the same to me, which I hope you received. I inclose herewith copies of a letter from Mr. Thomson, some new instructions, and one of the commissions. The other two are in the same words, except, that, instead of the words *the United Netherlands*, there is in one *France*, and in the other *Sweden*. These came by Monsieur de la Luzerne, but it was not before Wednesday last that I received them. You will see that a good deal of business is cut out for us, — treaties to be made with, I think, twenty powers in two years, — so that we are not likely to eat the bread of idleness; and that we may not surfeit by eating too much, our masters have diminished our allowance. I commend their economy, and shall imitate it by diminishing my expense. Our too liberal entertainment of our countrymen here, has been reported at home by our guests, to our disadvantage, and has given offence. They must be contented for the future, as I am, with plain beef and pudding. The readers of Connecticut news-

[1] The Baron Hertzberg, whose dissertation had been read at Berlin on the 29th of January of this year. See an account of it in volume iv. p. 558, note.

papers ought not to be troubled with any more accounts of our extravagance. For my own part, if I could sit down to dinner on a piece of their excellent salt pork and pumpkin, I would not give a farthing for all the luxuries of Paris.

I am glad to hear that your family are safely arrived at London, and that you propose to bring them here with you. Your life will be more comfortable.

I thank you much for the translation of the Abbé de Mably's letters. The French edition is not yet published here. I have as yet only had time to run over the translator's preface, which seems well written. I imagine Mr. Sowden to be a Presbyterian minister, as I formerly corresponded with one of that name in Holland, who, I suppose, might be his father. I have not seen the piece you mention of a Berlin academician. I should not object to his enjoyment of the discovery he has made, that *despotism* is the best possible form of government, by his living under it as long as he pleases. For I admire the decision of his Prince in a similar case, the dispute among his clergy concerning the duration of hell torments.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS CUSHING.

Auteuil, 25 October, 1784.

Dear Sir, — Within a few days I have received your favor of the 16th of August, with the resolve of the general court of the 6th and 7th of July.

The line between Massachusetts and Nova Scotia gave me much uneasiness at the time of the negotiation of the provisional articles, and still continues to distress me. I knew that the French in former times had a practice of erecting a holy cross of wood upon every river they had a sight of, and that such crosses had been found on the banks of all the rivers in that region, and that several rivers, for this reason, were equally entitled with any one, to the appellation of St. Croix. St. John's River had a number of those crosses, and was as probably meant in the grant to Sir William Alexander, and in the charters of Massachusetts, as any other. I would accordingly have insisted on St. John's as the limit. But no map or docu-

ment called St. John's St. Croix, nor was there one paper to justify us in insisting on it. The charters, the grant to Alexander, all the maps and other papers agreed in this, that St. Croix was the line between Massachusetts and Nova Scotia. My colleagues thought they could not be justified in insisting on a boundary which no record or memorial supported, and I confess I thought so too, after mature reflection; especially as the British ministers insisted long on Kennebec, and to the last moment on Penobscot, and we found their instructions upon this point were so rigorous, that they would not have agreed to St. John's without sending another courier to England, a loss of time which would not only have hazarded, but finally lost the whole peace for that year, as I fully believe.

We had before us, through the whole negotiation, a variety of maps; but it was Mitchell's map, upon which was marked out the whole of the boundary lines of the United States; and the river St. Croix which we fixed on was, upon that map, the nearest river to St. John's; so that, in all equity, good conscience, and honor, the river next to St. John's should be the boundary. I am glad the general court are taking early measures, and hope they will pursue them steadily, until the point is settled, which it may be now amicably; if neglected long, it may be more difficult.

It is reported here that the Indians are at war with the English, which is the excuse given out for the neglect of evacuating the posts upon our frontier near the lakes. Sir John Johnson's conference may be intended to make peace, in order to the evacuation, which could not easily be performed in sight of hostile Indians. I cannot believe that the British ministry mean to violate the treaty in this point, because it must bring on a war which none of them would be willing to take upon himself at present.

I was once upon a committee with Mr. Bowdoin, and drew a state of the claim of the Province to the lands now called Vermont; and I learn, by a letter from Mr. Dalton, that the report, in my handwriting, has been lately before the general court. It contains all I ever knew upon the subject, and much more than I now remember.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Auteuil, 3 November, 1784.

Sir, — Dr. Franklin has lately communicated to Mr. Jefferson and me a letter he has received from the Count de Vergennes, and another from M. Grand. The first informs that M. Marbois had informed him, that, upon his application to the superintendent of finances, he had received an answer by Mr. Gouverneur Morris, that letters should be written both to Amsterdam and Paris, to provide for the payment of the interest of the ten millions of livres borrowed for the United States in Holland by the King; and reminds the American minister that other interest is due, and that the first payment of the capital will become due next year. M. Grand informs, that he is already about fifty thousand livres in advance for loan-office certificates, salaries, &c. These letters the doctor will, no doubt, transmit to congress; and as they relate to matters within his department, I might have been excused from mentioning them, if the mention of Amsterdam had not made it probable that Mr. Morris had it in contemplation to draw upon our bankers there for money to discharge this interest; and I cannot excuse myself from observing, that, if such drafts should be made, I am apprehensive they will be protested. France is at present in so much danger of being forced to take part in a war in the low countries, that I am not surprised at the Count de Vergennes' attention to matters of revenue, and that I cannot see any hope that Dr. Franklin will be able to obtain any relief from this Court.

It will be remembered that there is a debt of near a million and a half sterling to France, and another debt of more than half a million sterling in Holland, whose interests are constantly accruing. There are also salaries to ministers, and there is another call for money which is very pressing; the commerce of the Mediterranean is of great importance to the United States and to every one of them, and this commerce cannot be enjoyed with freedom, without treaties with the Barbary powers. It will be not only in vain, but dangerous and detrimental to open negotiations with these powers, without money for the customary presents. How are all these demands for money to

be satisfied? If cash, bills, or produce can be sent to Europe for the purpose, it will be happy for us; but I suppose that no man believes it possible; and, therefore, we must not only forego great future advantages, but violate contracts already made, and faith already pledged, and thereby totally ruin our credit, if not expose the property of our merchants to be seized abroad, or we must borrow more money in Europe. Now there is no part of Europe in which we can expect to borrow, unless it be in Holland, and there, we may rely upon it, all our hopes will fail us, if effectual measures are not taken to fund our foreign debt. If adequate funds were established for discharging the interest, we may hope for further credit; without them, our circumstances are absolutely desperate.

It is not for me to enter into the question how this is to be done; so far distant and so long absent, it would be impossible for me to form a judgment, if the subject were within my province, which it is not. The ability of our people for this and much greater things cannot be doubted by any man who knows any thing of their affairs, and it is a pity that any questions about the mode should retard this most necessary provision for the existence of our credit abroad.

I have this moment a letter from our bankers at Amsterdam, dated the 28th of October, in which they inform me that they have not received the ratification of my last loan; perhaps it did not arrive, until after the recess of congress. I must earnestly request that congress would despatch it as early as possible after their meeting, because the delay of it may excite an alarm and dash all our hopes at once. The half a million sterling which we have obtained in Holland, has been all transmitted to America in dollars, by the way of the Havana, or paid in redeeming bills of exchange, sold in America for very advantageous premiums. None of it has been laid out in goods, and, therefore, every other consideration calls upon us to be punctual, as well as our honor, which alone ought to be sufficient.

Inclosed are copies of papers received from M. Dumas, with my answers. I cannot forbear recommending this gentleman to congress upon this occasion, as the critical circumstances in the low countries at this time will render his intelligence very interesting, and his services at the Hague perhaps indispensably necessary.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

(*The following Questions, submitted by their High Mightinesses to M. Dumas, were by him transmitted to Mr. Adams, whose Answers are appended.*)

(*Translation.*)

QUESTIONS.

1. On proof of a transfer in good and due form, the property of a vessel to be American, can the necessary sea-letters be obtained at the Hague?

2. Is it necessary that the purchaser should be a citizen of some town belonging to one of the thirteen States, or will it suffice that he is settled there, though only since the acknowledgment of the independence of America? Has a *citizen* greater claims to the protection of congress than an *inhabitant?*

3. The property of a vessel being proved American (agreeably to the first question), is it indifferent in what port she is, and to what port she is destined, or is this confined to a certain port in Europe, and to a certain port in America, and *vice versâ?*

4. Is it necessary that the captain of such vessel should be an American citizen, or will it answer if he has been born in a city, town, or village actually dependent on congress?

5. In case of purchasing a vessel on account of an American, for which there is immediate employment, may she not be commanded by a captain of another nation, supposing that at the time no American captain could be found who might be intrusted with the command?

6. Should a vessel sold and transferred to a citizen or inhabitant of the continent, be taken by the enemy, sailing under foreign colors, could a reclamation by congress be expected?

7. In case such vessel should be bound from a port in Europe or America for a Mediterranean port, or should actually be at some port in the Mediterranean, and elsewhere destined, what means are to be taken, and what papers are to be shown, to obtain the necessary Turkish passports to navigate that sea?

ANSWERS.

1. There is no man at present in Holland legally authorized by the United States in congress assembled to issue sea-letters.

2. Both citizens and inhabitants have a right to protection. But every stranger who has been in the United States, or who may be there at present, is not an inhabitant. Different States have different definitions of this word. The domicil and the "*animus habitandi*" is necessary in all.

3. All vessels *bonâ fide* the property of American citizens or inhabitants have a right to protection.

4. American citizens and inhabitants have a right to navigate their vessels by captains and seamen of any nation.

5. Undoubtedly. But let the parties look to themselves, that the translation be *bonâ fide* and clearly proved.

6. The evidence of this must be very clear. The United States will scarcely interfere in such a case, if there is a doubt of the fact, or a suspicion of collusion.

7. The United States have not yet a treaty with the Turks or Barbary powers, and, therefore, no such papers are to be had.

TO M. DUMAS.

Auteuil, 3 November, 1784.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 26th of October with the seven questions inclosed. I have answered these questions to the best of my judgment, believing it to be my duty to give to my inquiring countrymen all the satisfaction in my power upon such occasions. I should wish, too, to gratify the Dutch merchants and all others as far as I can in character. But we must, above all things, have the utmost caution that we do not involve the United States in quarrels which are not their own. We can give no countenance, whatever, to any kind of fraud or collusion, or to any false or suspicious papers. The United States will protect their own flag, and the rights, liberties, and properties of their own citizens, but they can go no farther. If we could assist any man in Europe in this way, we ought surely to do it for Messrs. Willink, and if we refuse it to them,

certainly no others can complain. Although these gentlemen are in so high a trust under the United States, I cannot think them entitled to the character of citizens or inhabitants, and, therefore, should not think myself safe in giving them American papers for their vessels.

I hope the certificate you have given to Captain Veder may answer the end; and in the present, unexpected circumstances of the war, or at least danger of war, I should not venture to advise you not to give others in clear cases. They may do much good, and save to merchants and masters of vessels much trouble and expense; and I cannot foresee any evil they can do. But if any such certificate should be disputed and examined, it will be found null. You will continue to write all to congress; and you will soon, I hope, receive their commands.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be, dear sir,

Yours, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE MARÉCHAL DE CASTRIES.

Auteuil, 9 December, 1784.

Monsieur le Maréchal, — According to your desire, I have committed to writing the two or three observations on the business of masts, yards, and bowsprits, which I had last Tuesday the honor of making in conversation with your Excellency at Paris.

The eastern parts of the Massachusetts, particularly the counties of York, Cumberland, and Lincoln, and more especially the lands lying near the four great rivers, which meet in Merry-meeting Bay, and flow together under the name of Kennebec River into the sea, are the spot upon which grow the best pine trees for masts which are found in America, and from whence the English government, before the Revolution, procured their masts for large ships, unless perhaps they obtained a few from some parts of New Hampshire. By the charter of Massachusetts, pine trees were reserved to the Crown; and various acts of parliament were made, from time to time, forbidding, upon severe penalties, private persons to cut such trees. The King had an officer, under the title of surveyor-general of the woods,

who had under him a great number of deputy-surveyors for the inspection and conservation of these trees. Mr. Wentworth, the last royal governor of New Hampshire, was the last surveyor-general, at whose request the subscriber commenced and prosecuted a great number of libels in the court of admiralty at Boston, against transgressions of those acts of parliament, so that he thinks himself well warranted to say that those acts of parliament, instead of containing any proof of the bad quality of American pine trees, as your Excellency was pleased to say you had been informed, contained the best proof of their excellence, and of the high esteem in which the parliament held them.

There was a considerable number of large vessels which were called mast ships, constantly employed in transporting from Kennebec and Piscataqua Rivers pine trees for masts, spars, and bowsprits for the royal navy. And the trees of thirty-six inches diameter which the English were very fond of for their large ships, were only to be found in America.

There are upon the territory before described a number of families whose whole occupation has been to cut, draw, and prepare this kind of trees for the royal navy of England. It is a difficult, laborious, and hazardous business, and not very profitable; but being educated to this employment from their infancy, knowing perfectly the country and the lands where the trees are, the proper seasons for the business, and having their tools and machines, as well as their teams of cattle, always ready, and knowing all the most frugal ways of saving expenses and making advantages, they were able to live by the business, when other persons, without these advantages, would have ruined themselves. These people were commonly called mastmen, and they are so valuable a set of men, that whoever first engages them, whether the French or the English, will obtain an advantage. The English are said to have sent an agent to Boston; and there is no doubt that they will exert themselves to secure these mastmen, unless your Excellency, by seizing a favorable opportunity of contracting with some of the Americans now here, engage them beforehand.

Your Excellency will permit me to say, that I apprehend all surveys and experiments made upon the masts and spars now on board of the French ships, which were procured in America,

will not only be useless, but illusory. It will not be a fair trial, because, on the breaking out of hostilities between Great Britain and America, the whole system of the masting business and commerce was broken up. The mastmen, like the fishermen, not finding their usual employment, went into others, sold their cattle, and laid aside their tools; so that the pine timber furnished to the French ships, although the best then and there to be had, was only such as was left by the English, or obtained by hazard in improper places, and in a green, unseasoned state. It is no wonder, then, if the wood is found to shrink, for the wood of the pine tree is of such a nature, that when cut and used green, it always shrinks, whether it grows in America or in Sweden, Norway, or Russia.

I am well informed that the most intelligent officers of the British navy attributed the loss of the great number of the capital ships by bad weather in the late war, a loss unprecedented in any former war, wholly to the want of American masts. The ministry ordered their expedition to Penobscot, in the view of obtaining masts, but they found themselves disappointed. They found there pine trees, it is true, but no mastmen, no sufficient teams of cattle, no proper machines for the business. All these were without their lines. So that they obtained no masts of any value.

There is not in America, at least within my knowledge, a merchant more intelligent, or any way more capable of giving your Excellency full information upon the subject, nor more worthy of confidence, than Mr. Tracy and Mr. Jackson, who are now in Paris, and to them I beg leave to refer.

With great and sincere respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 15 December, 1784.

Sir, — I venture to address myself to you as minister of foreign affairs, because I sincerely hope that you have accepted that important office.

The Emperor of Morocco sent an ambassador last winter to Holland to demand materials for some frigates, and as none of the great maritime powers have the courage or the will to refuse

such requisitions, obtained them. It now appears probable that they have been employed in corsairs against American trade, and one Virginia vessel appears to have been taken and carried to Tangiers. This has spread an alarm, and raised the insurance on American vessels, and rendered it necessary that something should be soon done.

There is danger of our making mistakes upon this occasion. Some are of opinion that our trade in the Mediterranean is not worth the expense of the presents we must make the piratical states to obtain treaties with them. Others think it humiliating to treat with such enemies of the human race, and that it would be more manly to fight them. The first, I think, have not calculated the value of our Mediterranean trade, in which every one of our States is deeply interested. But this is not all. The piratical corsairs will go all over the ocean, and will even raise the insurance upon all our commerce so high, as to cost us more in this single article than all the presents exacted would amount to. The last have more spirit than prudence. As long as France, England, Holland, the Emperor, &c., will submit to be tributary to these robbers, and even encourage them, to what purpose should we make war upon them? The resolution might be heroic, but would not be wise. The contest would be unequal. They can injure us very sensibly, but we cannot hurt them in the smallest degree. We have, or shall have, a rich trade at sea exposed to their depredations; they have none at all upon which we can make reprisals. If we take a vessel of theirs, we get nothing but a bad vessel fit only to burn, a few guns and a few barbarians, whom we may hang or enslave if we will, and the unfeeling tyrants, whose subjects they are, will think no more of it than if we had killed so many caterpillars upon an apple-tree. When they take a vessel of ours, they not only get a rich prize, but they enslave the men, and, if there are among them men of any rank or note, they demand most exorbitant ransoms for them. If we could even send a force sufficient to burn a town, their unfeeling governors would only insult and deride. Unless it were possible, then, to persuade the great maritime powers of Europe to unite in the suppression of these piracies, it would be very imprudent for us to entertain any thoughts of contending with them, and will only lay a foundation, by irritating their passions, and increasing

their insolence and their demands, for long and severe repentance. I hope, therefore, we shall think of nothing but treating with them.

But how? where is the money? France calls upon us to fulfil our engagements with her, both for interest and principal, and our creditors in Holland, who are very numerous, will soon be uneasy, unless something is done for their security. Holland is the only place where we can borrow money, and there it will be impracticable, unless our European debt at least be consolidated.

If congress, therefore, think of borrowing in Holland, they must begin by laying duties at home to pay the interest.

I have not time to enlarge at present on any subject. This is the most pressing, and deserves the immediate attention of congress and their ministers, of whom I hope you are one, as I am very sure no man is better qualified or better disposed; but if, unfortunately, you should not be in office, let me pray you to transmit the substance of this letter to congress.

With great and sincere respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

Auteuil, 10 January, 1785.

Gentlemen, — I have received with much pleasure your letters of the 20th and 30th of December. Give me leave to congratulate you on the flourishing state of your treasury, which furnishes a very good proof that the credit of the United States has much ameliorated since January, 1784, when I was obliged to undertake and undergo all the hardships and inconveniences of a winter voyage and journey in packet-boats, iceboats, and boors' wagons, in extreme cold weather, to prevent Mr. Morris's bills from being protested. It is a great satisfaction to me to reflect that I have been able, with your assistance, to obtain in Holland a loan of money for my country of near seven millions of guilders, a sum very nearly equal to all that was ever lent us by France. Our debt to France is thirty-four millions of livres, ten millions of which were borrowed in Holland on the warranty of the states-general. You see, therefore, that the whole national debt of the United States in Europe is less than two

millions sterling. If a capitalist in Holland compares this with the national debt of England or France, or any other power, and at the same time considers the number of inhabitants, the extent and fertility of territory, the advantages for trade, and, above all, the rapid increase of population, industry, agriculture, commerce, and fisheries, he will soon think his money safer in the hands of the United States, and American stocks superior to any other.

For my own part, I confess I wish that congress would borrow money in Holland to pay off their debt to France, that they might not owe a shilling anywhere but in Holland. This, however, I say without authority; and it is certain that congress will not borrow money upon higher terms than they pay at present in France, to pay off the French debt.

I wait to know how many obligations you have on hand. I have no orders from congress to open a new loan, and I fancy I shall never have any to open another upon any other, at least higher terms, than the first five millions. But I should be glad to know your sentiments, whether there is a good prospect of success.

There is one subject which concerns myself personally, which I beg leave to propose to your consideration. My salary at present is so low, that it is with the utmost difficulty I can live upon it in any kind of proportion to the public character I sustain, and, therefore, I cannot afford to pay a commission of one per cent. of M. Van den Yver in Paris, and Mr. Puller in London, as those bankers have heretofore charged; and congress may perhaps be displeased to be charged with such a commission, merely for my convenience of receiving my money in London or Paris. You know, gentlemen, that of all the immense sums that I have borrowed upon my signature for the United States, not one farthing of benefit accrues to me; and you know how parsimonious I have been of orders for money, even for necessary public services. So that I should be obliged to you for your advice, whether there is not any method by which I may receive my salary and disbursements in Paris or London, as may be most convenient to my affairs, or whether it will not be better for me to draw bills upon you in favor of bankers or merchants in London or Paris.

I accept with a sensible pleasure, gentlemen, your kind com-

pliments of the season, and, in return, my family joins with me, in wishing you and your families all health, wealth, and honor, not only for the year ensuing, but for a long course of years after it. I remain, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Auteuil, 10 January, 1785.

Sir, — I have the satisfaction to inform congress, that, by a letter from our bankers in Amsterdam, I am informed they have in hand near a million of guilders, and, consequently, that the two loans I have opened, amounting in the whole to seven millions of guilders, are almost full. This is a full proof of an amelioration of our credit since January, 1784, when I was obliged, in a very tender state of convalescence, and an uncommonly rigorous season, to undergo the hardships and dangers of a voyage and journey in packet-boats, ice-boats, and boors' wagons, to obtain money to save Mr. Morris's bills from being protested.

This is a very fortunate circumstance for us at this time, both as it furnishes us the means of treating with the Barbary powers, if congress should authorize us to make the necessary presents, upon which points we wait their instructions, and as it will enable congress to pay the interest of their debt to France.

Four letters upon the subject of this interest have been communicated to his colleagues by Dr. Franklin, one from the Count de Vergennes, and three from M. Grand, and no doubt transmitted to congress.

Dr. Franklin has sounded me several times, to know if I was willing to pay the salaries of the ministers, and Mr. Carmichael's salary, Mr. Dumas' salary, and Colonel Humphreys'. In short, there is no money in Europe at present, but what has been obtained in Holland by my signature, and is supposed to be under my inspection. I shall, therefore, be very soon embarrassed, as there will be many applications to me for money, and I shall not dare to advance it without orders. I therefore pray for the explicit instructions of congress upon this subject. Your ministers in Europe must not starve on the one hand, and I must not, on the other, presume to appropriate money, unappropriated by congress, without necessity. If it should be the

pleasure of congress that I should draw for necessary moneys upon the certificate of their ministers here, or that they should draw upon my bankers in Amsterdam, this would relieve me from a great anxiety. At all events, it is absolutely necessary that congress should communicate to me their commands.

I wish also to know whether it is the expectation of congress that I should open a new loan, as one of the old ones is full, and the other is very near it.

I confess it grieves me to put my hand to an obligation, as it always brings home to my heart the reflection that I am burdening the industry and labor of my fellow-citizens and countrymen with a heavy load; and when demands are laid before me for millions of livres, for interest already due, I cannot help wishing that I might never have occasion to sign another obligation. It will, nevertheless, be absolutely necessary, as I believe, to borrow somewhat more; but it behoves the people to consider the necessity they are under of exerting themselves in season to provide for the payment of their foreign debt, and especially to avoid as much as possible the necessity of increasing it. They will find it very impoverishing to send annually out of their country such large sums for the payment of interest; an enormous bulk of the produce of the country must go to make up these sums, and we shall find the drain very exhausting to our patience, if not to our strength.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

BARON DE THULEMEIER TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 24 Janvier, 1785.

Vous recevrez, monsieur, par un courier Hollandais, adressé à Messieurs de Berkenrode et Brantzen, un paquet sous votre enveloppe et celle de Messieurs Franklin et Jefferson. Il renferme les observations du roi sur le contre-projet du traité de commerce, qui m'a été remis de votre part, au mois de Novembre de l'année dernière. Agréez qu'en qualité de votre ancien collègue, toujours reconnaissant de l'amitié que vous m'avez témoignée pendant votre séjour à la Haie, je prenne la liberté de vous parler avec quelque franchise. Les observations sur les articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, et 12, du contre-projet, sont envisagées à Berlin,

comme trop essentielles, pour qu'on puisse se départir des changemens et additions proposés. Je ne vous dissimulerai point même, monsieur, qu'à en juger par mes instructions, la conclusion du traité en dépendra, selon toute apparence. Les remarques postérieures contribueront uniquement à donner plus de clarté et de précision à quelques articles.

Daignez, monsieur, envisager tout ceci, non comme une déclaration ministérielle, mais simplement comme un témoignage de ma confiance, et du désir dont je suis animé d'assurer le succès de nos soins communs, et d'éloigner tout ce qui pourrait faire naître des obstacles trop essentiels pour que je puisse espérer de les surmonter. Un mot de réponse de votre part me feroit grand plaisir. Agréez les assurances, &c.

De Thulemeier.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 2 February, 1785.

Sir, — Last week we received your much esteemed favor of 10 January, and observed with much pleasure your satisfaction on the flourishing state of the treasury of the United States in our hands. Your Excellency desires our opinion, whether the prospect of making new loans for the congress would be favorable. In answer to this, we heartily wish that we may not very soon be charged to try it, and that before it may become necessary, congress may be put in a situation, by a unanimous consentment of all the American States of the confederation, to point out a sufficient fund for the punctual payment of the capital and interest, which, as you know, has not been the case with the two first loans, and which at present would absolutely be required, because people in this country know that the States have not agreed upon this capital point. This circumstance certainly occasions that the credit of the United States cannot be carried to the point which we believe it deserves in consequence of the inward solidity and promising prospect of the sources of her welfare. Besides this, we are daily questioned about the ratification of the last loan, and we are at a loss what we shall answer, having not received any letters from the office of finance since the time when Mr. Morris resigned.

But, sir, whenever our wishes in these points should be ful-

filled, which certainly would strengthen greatly the American credit, we should not advise to try another loan for some time, because we know that a great number of bonds of both of the former remain still in the hands of the undertakers, which, as you know, is the second hand, and there is no great prospect that they will sell their shares so soon, on occasion that we have every day new loans opened here, as, for instance, one of seven millions in favor of the East India Company, one of twelve hundred thousand florins for the States of Zealand, one of two millions for Sweden, and we expect every day a loan for our Province; added to this, large sums are employed in the French loan, and you will easily conclude that money becomes very scarce, which we hope will not be the case next year; and if then congress might wish to pay off the loans in France, and raise the money in this country, it would give us much pleasure to give her again satisfaction with our endeavors, and at the same time to observe an unlimited confidence with our countrymen.

We observe, sir, what you are pleased to mention about the commission which our bankers charge upon the sums, which they pay you on account of your salary. It is our opinion, that properly this commission should be bonified by congress, and even that they should indemnify your Excellency for the trouble and hardships you had on their behalf, would not be amiss. But it being out of our line to decide any thing of that kind, we will only say, that, in case the said commission is charged by congress to your account, we will in future give such orders that you will have no reason to complain about it.

We beg to return our compliments to your worthy family, and remain, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nich. and Jacob Van Staphorst,
De la Lande and Fynje.

TO BARON DE THULEMEIER.

Auteuil, 13 February, 1785.

Sir, — Your favor of the 24th of January did not reach me until two days ago. I communicated the observations inclosed

in it immediately to my colleagues, who will transmit you our answers as soon as health and other circumstances will admit, I have communicated to them also your personal and confidential observations to me. They will have great weight, as they ought to have.

I am weary of the slow motions of other courts and states, as much as I admire the despatch, intelligence, and decision of that of Berlin, and as much as I am charmed to find the King do us the honor to agree to the platonic philosophy of some of our articles, which are at least a good lesson to mankind, and will derive more influence from a treaty ratified by the King of Prussia, than from the writings of Plato or Sir Thomas More.

You may depend upon it, I will do every thing in my power to bring this treaty to a speedy conclusion, and to conform in every thing, as far as I can consistently with my instructions, to his Majesty's observations.

This answer, you perceive, is not ministerial, any more than your letter. But I hope to have the honor of signing the treaty with you, if I should not have that of residing near you at the Hague, which I wish, in a short time.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS.

Auteuil, 16 February, 1785.

GENTLEMEN, — I have received your favor of the 6th of January and that of the 2d of February, and am much obliged to you for the particular account of the state of the cash and obligations in your hands. By all that I have learned from your letters, as well as by inquiry in conversation, it seems to be so possible, and indeed so probable, that the United States might be exposed to a loss of several hundred thousand guilders by a sudden fall of the agio, that I have not been able to resolve upon giving you directions to put the cash on hand into the bank, especially as I have every day expected, and still expect, not only the ratification of the last loan, but orders from congress or their commissioners of the treasury what to do with the whole sum. I still expect every moment to receive the orders of congress, and, therefore, shall not venture as yet to give

orders for putting the money into the bank. But, as you are on the spot, and are better informed than I am, I must leave it to your judgments to do what you shall think most for the interest of the United States, either by putting the whole, or a part, or none of the money into the bank. But, gentlemen, let me, above all things, recommend it to you, to keep the congress constantly informed of the state of their affairs in your hands. You may address your letters either to the president, his Excellency Richard Henry Lee, or to the office of finance. Perhaps it would be best to address duplicates; one to the president, and the other to the commissioners of the treasury.

I thank you, gentlemen, for what you say about my salary. But would it not be a saving for me to draw bills upon you and sell them here? As to an indemnification to me for "my troubles and hardships," I have no idea of asking, or even wishing for such a thing. Exclusive of all these, it would require a larger sum perhaps than you imagine, to indemnify me for my *losses*. This, too, I neither expect nor desire. Indeed, while the war continued, and all was at stake, I never thought about trouble, hardships, losses, or savings. But as peace is made, and danger to the public is no more, I should think myself bound to economy for the sake of my family, if I were not necessitated to it in order to pay my daily expenses, as I literally am at present. With much esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 9 March, 1785.

SIR, — Permit me to congratulate the United States upon the acquisition of a minister of foreign affairs whose long services have so justly acquired their confidence, and whose experience, as well as his talents, so fully qualify him for this important trust.

The joint despatches of their ministers here will inform congress of the slow progress of the negotiations intrusted to their care. These delays are owing to the ordinary character of the deliberations of courts, and are in no measure occasioned by any inattention or inactivity on our part, and, as they are irremediable, must be submitted to with patience.

I must beg leave to repeat a request mentioned in several of my late letters, that congress would be pleased to transmit the ratification of my last loan, which I opened a year ago in Holland, and is long since full. The delay of the ratification has an ill effect. Congress will be pleased too to give orders, if it is not yet done, as I hope it has been, concerning near a million of guilders, which remain in the hands of their bankers at Amsterdam, as appears by some extracts of letters inclosed.

I have lately inquired of the Baron de Stael, the Swedish ambassador, and of M. d'Asp, the Swedish chargé d'affaires, an old acquaintance at the Hague, who has been lately removed to this Court, concerning the presents given by their Court to the Barbary powers. Both very obligingly promised to write to Stockholm for full information upon this subject. I have written to Mr. Dumas to apply to Mr. Bisdom and Mr. Van der Hope to learn the sums given by the Republic. The answers of those gentlemen I have communicated to my colleagues, and copies of them will be transmitted to congress by Mr. Humphreys in the joint despatches. If we can avoid this humiliating tribute, I should wish it with all my heart, but am afraid we must sooner or later submit to it. I cannot find it in my heart to wish ill-success to the two empires, if they really have, as they are suspected to have, the project of driving wholly out of Europe the Turkish empire, because the Barbary powers and their hateful piracies would probably come to an end at the same time. We wait for orders relative to those States, thinking it dangerous saying a word to Morocco before we are ready to treat with all.

There is at this time so intimate a connection between France, Sweden, and Holland, that I fancy we shall scarcely persuade either of the latter to agree to any supplementary treaties, unless the former should set the example, which we cannot expect, considering the opposition the ministry meets with from the merchants of the seaport towns, and even from some sovereign Courts. The ordinance of 30th August, 1784, which moderates the rigor of the letters-patent of October, 1727, and admits foreigners to the commerce of the Colonies under certain restrictions, has excited remonstrances from the merchants of Marseilles, Bordeaux, Rochelle, Nantes, St. Maloes, and Havre de Grace, and the parliament of Bordeaux has remonstrated,

and that of Bretagne was very near it. The Marshal de Castries is yet unmoved, but this opposition will, I fear, discourage him from going further.

These remonstrances attack every part of the first article; they oppose the free ports or *entrepôts;* they oppose the liberty to strangers to import timber, coal, even live stock, but especially salt beef, saltfish, rice, Indian corn, vegetables, leather tanned or in the hair, pitch, tar, turpentine; they are eager for reviving the regulations of 1727, and totally excluding all foreigners from their islands. In short, I see that French merchants consider their Colonies and colonists as English merchants considered us twenty years ago. It is true that all have not been equally extravagant; some have gone in their remonstrances no farther than against salt beef and salt fish.

Merchants, whether French, English, or Dutch, are very bad rulers of colonies at a distance, and their mistakes, if not firmly corrected by their governments, will make a serious common cause between Americans, northern and western.

The French fisheries, in consequence of the extension of their limits by the treaty of peace, upon the island of Newfoundland, and the free communication between the United States and St. Peters and Miquelon, have succeeded the last year in a remarkable manner. Marseilles, Bordeaux, and Rochelle, and many other places, have engaged in the Newfoundland fishery with a new ardor and uncommon profit. This is one striking advantage, arising wholly from their alliance with us, and they ought to be too sensible of it, to wish so soon to exclude us wholly from their islands. The government and more enlightened part of the nation are so, and will not give way to the interested clamors of those who see no further than their own private profit.

Nothing is more extravagant than the confident pretensions of French and English merchants, that they can supply their own islands. It is whimsical, but it is true, that the mercantile spirit should be the most hostile to the freedom of commerce; governments the most disposed to favor it are continually solicited by bodies of merchants, from partial views and private interests, to restrain and shackle it.

England, it is plain, will never treat with us here; and it is for congress to determine, whether they will accept the proposi-

tion of the Court of St. James, and send a minister there, or renounce all thoughts of treating with it upon any thing. Spain seems equally averse to treating here; but if Mr. Gardoqui has arrived, who has full powers, congress may treat with him at New York.

The general state of Europe is critical, but the claims of the Emperor are so directly against treaties which interest so essentially all Europe, that I do not believe he will urge on a war that must embroil all the world, and end not at all to his advantage or honor. With very great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

SECRETARY JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 15 March, 1785.

Dear Sir, — The inclosed extracts from the Journal of congress will inform you of your appointment to go as minister to the Court of London, and of Mr. Smith being elected secretary of legation.[1]

I congratulate you on this event. It argues the confidence reposed in you by the United States, and, I am persuaded, will redound to your advantage as well as to your reputation.

The necessary papers are preparing, and Mr. Smith will carry them to you by the next packet.

With great respect, &c.

John Jay.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Auteuil, 20 March, 1785.

Gentlemen, — According to your desire, I went early this morning to Versailles, and finding the Count de Vergennes unembarrassed with company, and only attended by his private

[1] By the United States in congress assembled, —

February 24, 1785. Congress proceeded to the election of a minister plenipotentiary to represent the United States of America at the Court of Great Britain; and the ballot being taken, the Honorable John Adams was elected.

March 1, 1785. Congress proceeded to the election of a secretary to the legation to the Court of Great Britain; and the ballots being taken, Colonel William Smith was elected.

Charles Thomson, *Secretary.*

secretaries. I soon obtained the honor of a conference, in which I told him that my colleagues were very sorry that indisposition necessarily prevented their paying their respects to him in person, and obliged them to request me alone to wait on him, and ask his advice upon a thorny question we had with the Barbary powers. He asked what it was; and I put into his hand all the letters upon the subject, in French, Spanish, Italian, and English, all of which he read very attentively, and observed that it was obvious what was wanted, and what had piqued the Emperor of Morocco, namely, — that congress had not written to him, nor sent him a consul with the customary presents; for that he was the most interested man in the world, and the most greedy of money. He asked whether we had written to congress and obtained their instructions. I answered, that we had full powers to treat with Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and the rest; but that it was impossible for us to go there, and that we had not a power of substitution. He said, then, we should write to the Emperor. I asked, if he would do us the favor to convey a letter for us through the French consul. He said he could not do this himself, because it was not in his department; but if we would make an office of it, he would communicate it to the Marshal de Castries, and return us his answer.

I told him, that in looking over the treaties between the several Christian powers and the Barbary States, we found that the treaty between the Crown of France and Algiers of the 25th of April, 1684, was expired, or near expiring, and we were desirous of knowing (if the question was not indiscreet) whether it had been renewed. He smiled upon this, and said it was true their treaty was upon the point of expiring, but he could not tell me whether it were renewed, as it was not in his department; but if we should insert this inquiry in our office, he would endeavor to obtain the Marshal de Castries's answer.

I told him that, in order to lay before congress all the information we could, and to enable them to judge the better what other orders to give us, or what other course to take, we had obtained authentic information from Mr. Bisdom and Mr. Van der Hope, concerning the presents annually given by their High Mightinesses, and that we should be very glad to know (if it was not improper) what was the annual amount of the presents made by his Majesty to each of those States, and in what arti-

cles they consisted. He said, the king never sent them any naval or military stores, but he sent them glasses and other things of value; but that as it was not in his department, he could not give me particular information, but that we might put this into our office, with the other things.

I asked if there was not a considerable trade and frequent intercourse between parts of this kingdom and the coast of Barbary. He said there was, from Marseilles and the other ports upon the Mediterranean; but he thought, if we had presents to send, it would be more convenient to send them from Cadiz.

I then asked the favor of his advice, whether, in our letter to the Emperor of Morocco, we should leave it to his option to send here a minister to treat with us, or to wait until we could write to congress, and recommend it to them, to send a consul. He said he would by no means advise us to invite the Emperor to send a minister here to treat with us, because we must maintain him here and bear all the expenses of his voyages and journeys, which would be much more costly than for congress to send a consul.

But the Count concluded the whole conference by observing that every thing relative to this business was out of his department, and that we must state to him in writing all we desired to know or to have done, and he would convey it to the minister of the marine, and communicate to us his answer, and that we might depend upon it, that whenever we thought proper to make any office to him, it should be carefully attended to.

He added very particular inquiries concerning the health of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson, which I answered to the best of my knowledge, and took my leave.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

SECRETARY JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office of Foreign Affairs, 31 March, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I have the honor of transmitting to you, herewith inclosed, a certified copy of an act of congress of the 21st instant, instructing you to communicate to Mr. St. Saphorin the high sense the United States in congress assembled entertain of the

liberal decision made by his Danish Majesty on the question proposed to his minister by you, respecting the ordination of American candidates for holy orders in the Episcopal church, commonly called the Church of England.

Congress has been pleased to order me to transmit copies of your letter, and the other papers on this subject, to the executives of the different States; and I am persuaded they will receive with pleasure this mark of your attention and of his Danish Majesty's friendly disposition.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO DR. PRICE.

Auteuil, 8 April, 1785.

SIR, — Some time since I received from Dr. Franklin a copy of the first edition of your Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution, and lately a copy of the second. I am much obliged to you, sir, for your kind attention to me, and for these valuable presents.

I think it may be said in praise of the citizens of the United States, that they are sincere inquirers after truth in matters of government and commerce; at least that there are among them as many, in proportion, of this liberal character, as any other country possesses. They cannot, therefore, but be obliged to you, and any other writers capable of throwing light upon these objects, who will take the pains to give them advice.

I am happy to find myself perfectly agreed with you, that we should begin by setting conscience free. When all men of all religions consistent with morals and property, shall enjoy equal liberty, property, or rather security of property, and an equal chance for honors and power, and when government shall be considered as having in it nothing more mysterious or divine than other arts or sciences, we may expect that improvements will be made in the human character and the state of society. But at what an immense distance is that period! Notwithstanding all that has been written from Sidney and Locke down to Dr. Price and the Abbé de Mably, all Europe still believes sovereignty to be a divine right, except a few men of letters.

Even in Holland their sovereignty, which resides in more than four thousand persons, is all divine.

But I did not intend to enter into details. If you will permit, I should be glad to communicate with you concerning these things.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 13 April, 1785.

SIR, — I have written by the late packets for the orders of congress concerning near a million of guilders in the hands of Messrs. Willink & Co. in Amsterdam, and requesting the ratification of my last loan and other subjects. By the February packet, hourly expected, I hope to have the honor of letters from you, with the pleasure of congress relative to these matters.

Our joint despatches will show all the information we have yet obtained concerning the power of the Barbary States, and the costliness of their friendship. We must proceed slowly and cautiously. I often hear the trade of the Mediterranean and of the Levant slightly spoken of, and represented as of small value to the United States. I think very differently, with an absolute certainty that time will demonstrate me in the right. But the rise of insurance on all of our trade is to be added to the full value of the trade we may have in the Mediterranean and the Levant; and, what is worse, we have the cries of our countrymen in captivity, in chains, and exposed to many cruelties, to consider. It is not the loss of property which has induced any nation to become tributary to them, but this inhuman practice of enslaving captives. France, England, and Holland have avoided stipulating in treaties to pay a tribute; but Sweden and Denmark have not. I hope we shall not imitate the example of these last. If we are directed to negotiate, we shall probably negotiate through the French consul; but it will be necessary, finally, for congress to send consuls to sign the treaties and to make the presents. We have collected some information which will be useful to our country respecting these powers. I wish we were able to do as much under our commission

to Spain. That Court will not treat here, and for us to go to Madrid is a dangerous measure; we know not how much time the negotiation there may require, and if we go and return without success, it will be industriously spread by all the diplomatic corps, and will hurt the reputation of our country in Europe, and elate the English beyond measure; inconveniences which may be avoided by your conducting the negotiation with Mr. Gardoqui at New York, or by congress sending a minister to Madrid. This, I know, is much desired by the Spanish Court and by this Court, as many symptoms have indicated, particularly a conversation between the Duke de la Vauguyon and me a few days before his departure for Madrid. A minister at Madrid would be useful to us in conducting this business with the Barbary powers, and is, in all respects, as far as I can see, a desirable measure. The expense of maintaining three ministers is the same, whether they reside at Auteuil, Passy, and Paris, or at Madrid, Versailles, and the Hague; and I am sure we could not do less separately than we are likely to do together.

You remember, sir, that one of the first things Mr. Hartley said to us, was, to propose, in the name of the King his master and his minister Mr. Fox, that ministers should be exchanged immediately between congress and St. James's. You have received before now the formal proposition from the Marquis of Carmarthen, transmitted to us through the Duke of Dorset, to the same effect. The appointment of Mr. Temple as consul-general, is a still stronger indication of a real wish in the ministry that this measure may be pursued, and of a secret consciousness that they shall be obliged to treat. In their refusal to treat here, they would be justified by all the courts and diplomatic bodies in the world. I make no scruple, no hesitation to advise that a minister may be sent, nor will I be intimidated from giving this advice by any apprehension that I shall be suspected of a design or desire of going to England myself. Whoever goes will neither find it a lucrative nor a pleasant employment, nor will he be envied by me. I know that for years, if he does his duty, he will find no personal pleasure or advantage. But the measure of sending a minister to England, appears to me the corner stone of the true American system of politics in Europe; and, if it is not done, we shall have cause to repent it for a long

time, when it will be too late. Every thing is calculated, as it appears to me, to involve us in a war with England. Cries and prejudices are fomented in England and America, which have no other tendency but to involve us in a war long before we shall be ready. Ten or fifteen years hence we shall have nothing to fear from a war with England, if they should be mad enough to force us upon it. At present, it would distress us extremely, although it would ruin England. My system is a very simple one; let us preserve the friendship of France, Holland, and Spain, if we can, and in case of a war between France and England, let us preserve our neutrality, if possible. In order to preserve our friendship with France and Holland and Spain, it will be useful for us to avoid a war with England. To avoid a war with England, we should take the regular diplomatic steps to negotiate, to settle disputes as they rise, and to place the intercourse between the two nations upon a certain footing; then we may understand one another, avoid deceits and misrepresentations. It is so much the interest of England that we should be neutral in a future war, that I am persuaded cool and candid reasoning with their ministers upon the subject would convince them of it. The force of truth is greater, even in the minds of politicians, than the world in general is aware of. England is now mad with the hope of our having a war with Spain, and even France in consequence of the family compact, and of our courting them to become our allies and undertake our defence. Surely it would not be difficult for an American minister to convince a British one that this is chimerical, and that the only thing they ought to expect from America is neutrality. The real thing the English have to fear is our joining their enemies against them in a future war. She has no alliance to hope from us, unless Spain should force us into a war; and, even then, we ought not to ask or accept aid from England, if we could avoid it, unless France, from the family compact, should join Spain.

This reasoning and this system, you see, goes upon the supposition that we are independent of France, in point of moral and political obligation. But if the sentiments of America are otherwise, and those principles are general, which you and I once heard delivered with great formality and energy, namely,— "That America ought to join France against England in two

future wars; one to pay the debt of gratitude already contracted, and the other to show ourselves as generous as France had been," — I confess myself all wrong, and to be so totally ignorant of the rights, duties, and interests of my country, as to be altogether unfit for any share in their public affairs, foreign or domestic.

At any rate, our negotiations in this place have not answered the ends proposed by congress and expected by the people of America, nor is there now scarcely a possibility that they should. I am very happy in my friend Mr. Jefferson, and have nothing but my inutility to disgust me with a residence here. But I presume congress will not think it expedient to renew the commissions, or attempt any longer to carry on negotiations with the rest of the world in this place. If they should, however, I hope they will think of some other gentleman in my place, as it is my desire to return home at the expiration of the term of the present commissions.

With great respect and sincere esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 24 April, 1785.

SIR, — The letter you did me the honor to write me on the 11th of February last, containing the ratification of my last loan of two millions of guilders, having been properly addressed to me as minister at the Hague, by a mistake of the post-office at Paris, was sent to Holland, from whence it returned to me last night. This loan is long since full, as my first loan of five millions of guilders is nearly so; I must, therefore, solicit the further instructions of congress, whether I am to open any new loan or not.

Your letter to Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jefferson, and me, of the 14th of January, has been duly received and answered.

If I had known a few weeks sooner that congress had resolved to send a minister to London, it would have saved you the trouble of a letter upon the subject which you will receive by the packet. It has appeared to me for some time to be an important and a necessary measure; and although the gentleman who may be sent there, whoever he may be, will probably find him-

self in a thicket of briars, from which he will hardly get free without tearing his flesh, yet I am persuaded that the appearance of an American minister at the British Court will have good effects upon our affairs, even in France and Spain, and the nations in alliance with them, as well as in the courts and nations in the opposite scale of the balance; but especially upon the British and American nations.

Will it be foreign to the purpose upon this occasion, or improper for me, to observe, that the people in America, and their legislatures in the several States, should prepare the way for their minister in England to require a faithful execution of treaties, by setting the example of a punctual execution on their part? If we establish the principle, that we have a right to depart from the treaty in one article, because they have departed from it in another, they will certainly avail themselves of the same principle, and probably extend it as much farther, as their sense of justice is less, and their opinion of their own power, however ill-founded, is greater. It cannot, I think, be too often nor too earnestly recommended to our countrymen to consider the treaty as sacred, and to fulfil it in all its parts, according to its real spirit and intention, in good conscience. In that most delicate point of all, respecting the refugees, I even wish that the people could conquer their natural feelings and suppress their just resentments. This, I am confident, is the best revenge that can be taken, and will most effectually disarm even those among them who are most distinguished for their enmity. If we have any thing to fear from Canada and Nova Scotia, or for our whale fishery, it arises, and will arise, from our own severity to these people; and the same observation may be applied to the fur trade, and the posts upon the frontier.

Your desire, sir, to hear from me frequently, and to have my poor opinion on the affairs of your department, does me great honor, and shall be complied with to the utmost of my power; but I shall much oftener have occasion for your advice in such affairs as are intrusted to me. I think myself extremely happy, in common with our countrymen, that I have to correspond with a gentleman to whom our foreign affairs are very familiar by long experience, who knows where our difficulties and dangers lie, and who has proved himself, upon all occasions, superior to them.

I am sorry to learn that the French *chargé des affaires* has demanded Monsieur Longchamps to be delivered up, and am the more surprised, because I had understood from such sources as I thought authentic, that the punishment to which he has been sentenced was satisfactory at Court. It may not, however, be amiss for the French government to keep up a claim which may be a standing restraint to their own subjects in all foreign countries. But it cannot be doubted that the French ministry know our right to refuse, as well as theirs to demand, as there is no positive stipulation between the two powers that criminals shall be mutually given up, and surely it is no perfect right by the law of nations, nor is it a common practice; so far from it, that it will be difficult to show an example of it where there is no convention.[1]

Your packet for Mr. Carmichael shall be delivered to the Spanish ambassador to go by his courier, as you desire.

With the utmost respect and esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

BARON DE THULEMEIER TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 3 Mai, 1785.

MONSIEUR, — Je ressens une véritable satisfaction en mettant aujourd'hui la dernière main à un ouvrage qui a commencé d'être entrepris à la Haie sous vos auspices, et que vous avez favorisé, monsieur, de votre mieux. Vous verrez par la lettre ci jointe, que j'ai l'honneur de vous adresser en commun avec mes sieurs vos collègues, que le roi n'a rien laissé à désirer aux États de l'Amérique. Il s'agit actuellement que vous ayez la bonté de faire mettre au net un exemplaire du traité dont nous sommes convenus. J'en ferai autant, de mon côté. Quelque puisse être le plaisir que je me permettrais dans une entrevue, en renouvelant notre ancienne connoissance, je crains cependant que, les affaires du roi m'attachant à la Haie, S. M. ne préfère que l'échange se fasse par une voie sûre, telle que le paquet des ambassadeurs de L. H. P.

[1] The case of Longchamps is perspicuously stated in a note of Mr. Sparks, in *Washington's Writings*, vol. ix. p. 128.

Daignez m'accorder constamment une place dans votre souvenir, et agréez les assurances de l'attachement inviolable, &c.

De Thulemeier.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 4 May, 1785.

Sir, — The day before yesterday I received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 18th of March, inclosing a commission, instructions, and letter of credence to the Court of Great Britain, and a duplicate of your letter of February 11th, with the ratification of the loan in Holland.

The appointment to the Court of Great Britain demands my most grateful acknowledgments to congress, and the utmost care and diligence in the execution of it.

I am happy to see, by the resolution of March 7th, that a minister is to be appointed to succeed me at the Hague; both because a minister will be necessary there, and because that the minister in London will find employment for all his time, and should devote himself wholly to the duties of that mission. As no letter of recall is as yet arrived to me, I am a little perplexed. I have been a witness of so much friendship to the United States, and have experienced so much kindness to myself, in Holland, that I ought not finally to quit that country without taking leave of their High Mightinesses, even if established forms had not rendered such a ceremony indispensable.

There is no time to be lost unnecessarily in executing the instructions of congress; but you are very sensible, sir, of the necessity of taking leave of this Court and of the foreign ministers here, and of the time which such a formality takes up. It will, therefore, be longer before I can be in London than you may wish, perhaps five or six weeks; in the mean time, Colonel Smith, I hope, will arrive with the additional information, and I may take such measures as I can to prepare the way before us. The Duke of Dorset has offered me all the service in his power, and professes to wish me success. It may not be useless for me to see Mr. Harris at the Hague.

The instructions are perfectly agreeable to my own inclinations; but it would be my duty to carry them into punctual

execution to the utmost of my power, if they were not so. It is not the first time that a public trust of some importance has been committed to me, but I do not know that any ever made a deeper impression upon my spirits, or gave me more serious reflections. To do my duty to our country and her allies, and to reconcile the Americans and English upon principles and terms which may give satisfaction to all, is no easy task. I can promise nothing but industry; the prospect of success is far from being encouraging. The measure of sending a minister had become indispensable. Congress will have tried the experiment, and done all that, in the opinion of the world, was incumbent on them; and if the English nation perseveres in obstinacy and delusion, the United States will be fully informed of it, and have it undoubtedly in their power to do themselves justice. The resolutions of New York and Rhode Island, the former laying heavier duties upon British ships and merchandises, and the latter adopting the impost of five per cent., if the public papers inform us truly, are symptoms of a spirit rising in America which will either make the English friendly to us, or their enmity a blessing.

The Count d'Aranda told me yesterday that your packet to Mr. Carmichael was gone to Madrid.

I forgot to mention in its place your letter of March 15th. The confidence you express is mutual, which I esteem one of the happiest circumstances in my whole life. I have not the honor to be personally known to Mr. Smith, but he shall receive from me all the regard which becomes the relation between us.

With sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Anteuil, 5 May, 1785.

SIR, — The Britons boast that all the prophecies of the loss of the American trade from the independence of the United States have proved false; that the experiment has been tried, and the contest decided; that there was at the peace a competition of the commercial nations of Europe for the prize; that the superior abilities of the British manufacturers, and the greater capitals of their merchants, have enabled them to give

our traders better bargains and longer credit than any others in Europe; that, as we love our interests and have small fortunes, we must come to them who can furnish us with goods of the best qualities, at the cheapest rates, and allow us the longest time to pay; that Britain has monopolized our trade beyond credibility; that all the foreign merchants, — French, Dutch, and even Spanish and Portuguese, — who had engaged in our trade have failed, while few of theirs have suffered.

While, on the one hand, it is certain that in all this there is much exaggeration, it must be confessed, on the other, that there is too much truth; and the success of your mission to London will depend very much upon the researches of congress and the States into this subject, and the measures they may take in consequence of their inquiries. You will negotiate for reciprocities in commerce to very little purpose, while the British ministers and merchants are certain that they shall enjoy all the profits of our commerce under their own partial regulations.

It behoves the whole people of America, then, to turn their attention to this subject. It would be presumption in me to discuss the question, whether it is necessary that the States should give to congress a plenary power to govern the commerce of the whole confederation. I have been too long absent, and at too great a distance, to be able to form a judgment, even to my own satisfaction. But I can see numberless mischiefs and inconveniences arising from the want of unity and system, in the direction of such complicated interests, and every State will find itself necessitated frequently to apply to congress for their interposition, either by recommendations or decisions.

You will give me leave, then, to inquire, whether it may not be proper for congress to call upon the States, in such manner as they may judge constitutional, to furnish them with authentic accounts of all the exports and imports of every State since the peace, of the vessels which have entered or cleared out, the nation to which they belong, and all other particulars which may be thought proper. It should seem impossible that the Union can be preserved without some such general repository of the commercial interests and knowledge. The information to be derived from it would bring the States to act in concert, by showing the necessity of it to all, and congress or the States

might take such measures as would insure them justice against the English; from such a view, they might lay such discouragements on British ships and manufactures, and procure such advantages to their own, as would be beneficial to our country, while it would show the English their own weakness; heavy duties might be laid upon articles of luxury wrought in England and imported from thence, which would discourage the extravagant use of them among ourselves, place other nations upon as good or a better footing than the English, and raise a revenue for the public out of that enthusiasm for England which has been, and is still, so unwise in itself, and so hurtful to our country. Such measures as these would discover to the English that we know our own strength and their weakness, and would have probably a greater tendency to influence the ministry, by preparing the nation, than any reasoning which can be used. It is a diplomatic axiom, "that he always negotiates ill who is not in a condition to make himself feared;" but measures for this purpose must be taken by the people of America. Our army will be no terror to them, because they think at present they shall never send an army to fight us in our own country, and they do not believe that ours will go abroad to attack them; they are too proud of their own navy, and have too much disregard of ours, to dread us upon the sea, although experience should have taught them that their commerce might be much endangered by our cruisers. So that we have no means to make an impression on them but by commercial regulations, which the vulgar may see strike essentially at their interests without injuring our own.

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 8 May, 1785.

Sir, — In executing the instructions of congress of the 7th of March last, as well as all former orders which concern the Court of Great Britain, the ministry will, no doubt, find my commission and letter of credence sufficient authority. But you will see, by a letter from the Duke of Dorset, which your ministers here some time since transmitted, that the British cabinet have

conceived doubts, whether congress have power to treat of commercial matters, and whether our States should not separately grant their full powers to a minister. I think it may be taken for granted, that the States will never think of sending separate ambassadors, or of authorizing directly those appointed by congress. The idea of thirteen plenipotentiaries meeting together in a congress at every court in Europe, each with a full power and distinct instructions from his State, presents to view such a picture of confusion, altercation, expense, and endless delay, as must convince every man of its impracticability. Neither is there less absurdity in supposing that all the States should unite in the separate election of the same man, since there is not, never was, and never will be, a citizen whom each State would separately prefer for conducting the negotiation. It is equally inconceivable that each State should separately send a full power and separate instructions to the ministers appointed by congress. What a heterogeneous mass of papers, full of different objects, various views, and inconsistent and contradictory orders, must such a man pull out of his *portefeuille*, from time to time, to regulate his judgment and his conduct! He must be accountable, too, to thirteen different tribunals for his conduct; a situation in which no man would ever consent to stand, if it is possible, which I do not believe, that any State should ever wish for such a system. I suppose, too, that the confederation has already settled all these points, and that congress alone have authority to treat with foreign powers, and to appoint ambassadors and foreign ministers, and that the States have separately no power to do either. Yet it is plain, from the Duke of Dorset's letter, that the British cabinet have conceived a different opinion. This is to be accounted for, only by conjecturing that they have put an erroneous construction on the *limitation*, *restriction*, or *exception* in the article of our confederation, which gives to congress the power of appointing ambassadors and making treaties. This limitation is confined to treaties of commerce; all others congress have full power to make. From this limitation, however, will probably arise a great deal of difficulty and delay to me. If the British ministry wish and seek for delays, this will be their pretext. But even if they should wish for despatch, which is not likely, they may have propositions to make which will fall within the limitation, and,

in such case, it will not be in my power to agree with them. I can only transmit the proposition to congress, who will perhaps transmit them to the States, and no man can foresee when the answers will be received, so that the business can be brought to a conclusion.

It is a long time that congress have appeared to be aware of these obstructions in the way of our prosperity; but it does not yet appear that the States have been sufficiently attentive to them to remove them. It is not to be supposed that congress will ever frame any treaty of commerce with any foreign power, which shall be unequal and partial among the States, or oppressive upon any one of them; and it is very clear, from the situation and circumstances of the country, that no such treaty can ever be carried into execution or last long. If the States should be unwilling to confer upon congress a power to make treaties of commerce unlimited in point of time, it should seem that time alone might be a sufficient restriction; or the limitation might be to a particular nation, as the English for example, for a certain time, although it must be always remembered that we cannot favor the English with any thing which will not become common to other nations, — the French, the Dutch, and Swedes, at least.

It is very possible that the cabinet of St. James may decline even entering into any conferences at all upon the subject of a treaty of commerce, until the powers of congress are enlarged. If they should, the people of America cannot be too soon informed of it, and turn the deliberations in their assemblies to this object.

In this case, the only present hope of your minister will be, in obedience to his orders, to convince the British ministry of the necessary tendency of their restrictions on our trade, to incapacitate our merchants in a certain degree to make remittances to theirs; to urge the surrender of the posts, the restitution of the negroes, the explanation respecting the debts, and those other matters pointed out in his instructions, in which the right and power and equity are too clear to leave any plausible pretences for delay; and to transmit, by the earliest opportunities, to congress full and true accounts of his proceedings.

On the 30th of April, 1784, congress recommended to the legislatures of the States to vest them for fifteen years with the power to prohibit any merchandises from being imported or

exported in vessels belonging to, or navigated by, the subjects of any power with whom we shall have no treaties of commerce; and to prohibit the subjects of any foreign State, unless authorized by treaty, from importing into the United States any merchandises which are not the produce or manufacture of the dominions of the sovereign whose subjects they are; provided that the assent of nine States be necessary.

To suppose that the British cabinet intended, by the doubts of our powers, expressed in the Duke of Dorset's letter, to assist congress in obtaining from the legislatures a compliance with those recommendations, would be more charitable than their conduct in any other instance would justify. I rather think it was a mere excuse for delay, but it ought to operate upon the minds of the people of the States, and their assemblies, as a powerful incentive to compliance. But it may be still a question, whether a compliance of all the States will satisfy the British cabinet; and they may require an express vote of unlimited authority to congress, for a certain term at least, from each State, to enter into a treaty of commerce with them.

I have not yet been able to learn with certainty how many and which of the States have agreed to those recommendations of congress. It will now be necessary for me to be very attentive to this, and to request of you, sir, the earliest and most minute intelligence of every proceeding of congress and the States relative to it.

The last year must have been a prosperous period in the United States. The high prices of their produce, and the low prices of foreign merchandises, are a demonstration of it. Yet our shipping, our seamen, our carrying trade, have been discouraged. Present ease, and even wealth, should not be our only object.

We ought to attend to considerations of strength and defence. Our situation is different from some of the powers of Europe who have neglected their own defence. Switzerland is situated so, that if she should be attacked by one neighbor, she would infallibly be defended by two others. If attacked by Sardinia, she would be defended by France and the Emperor; if by the Emperor, France and Sardinia would support her; and if by France, the Emperor and Sardinia would unite to protect her. This is so fully known to her and all her neighbors, that she

fears nothing, and is at no expense. Holland, if attacked by France, found a friend in England; when attacked by England, France supports her; when the Emperor threatened her, she found a friend in France, too, and she will forever be sure that neither of these three great powers can ever suffer her to fall a prey to any of the others. She has relied so much upon this, as to neglect her defence, to her great regret at present. But what are Switzerland and Holland, — small powers limited by nature, so that they never can be great, — to the United States of America, destined beyond a doubt to be the greatest power on earth, and that within the life of man? This is so well known, that, instead of being overlooked among the powers, like Holland and Switzerland, we shall be more an object of jealousy than any other upon earth. All the powers know that it is impossible for any, the proudest of them, to conquer us; and, therefore, if we should be attacked by any one, the others will not be fond of undertaking our defence; knowing we can defend ourselves, they will leave us to do it, and, if they assist us at all, it will not be until we have done the work, and then it will be feebly, and only with a view of deriving more benefit and reputation from it than they do us good. They will be pleased to see us weakened, and our growth a little retarded. It behoves the United States, then, to knit themselves together in the bands of affection and mutual confidence, search their own resources to the bottom, form their foreign commerce into a system, and encourage their own navigation and seamen, and to these ends their carrying trade; and I am much afraid we shall never be able to do this, unless congress are vested with full power, under the limitations prescribed of fifteen years, and the concurrence of nine States, of forming treaties of commerce with foreign powers. With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO M. DUMAS.

Auteuil, 11 May, 1785.

Sir, — I received yesterday your favor of the 3d. I have received the orders of congress to go to London, according to the article you read in an English newspaper, which appears to have been copied from a gazette of New York. I have received

too a commission and letters of credence as minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America to the King of Great Britain; and Mr. William Smith, formerly aid-de-camp of General Washington, is secretary of legation. Congress have resolved, too, that it will be expedient to appoint a minister to their High Mightinesses to succeed me. At first, I concluded to go to the Hague, and take my leave of their High Mightinesses and of the nation, with all that respect, affection, and gratitude which is due from me to them; but, as I have not received a letter of recall, and my successor is not arrived, I cannot yet take leave according to the forms. I learn that Colonel Smith was to embark in the packet for Falmouth, so that he may be expected by this time; and I must see him as soon as possible, to receive from him some additional papers, amongst which may possibly be my letter of recall; so that I have concluded to go to London first. Upon the arrival of my letter of recall, or of my successor, I shall go over to the Hague, if possible. But if I should chance to be engaged in business for the public which I cannot leave, I shall take leave of their High Mightinesses and of his Most Serene Highness by a respectful letter. In this case, however, I will not lose the pleasure of a visit to Holland, and of seeing my friends there, but will take a journey there with Mrs. Adams as soon as the public service will admit.

Whether this mission to St. James's is a subject of felicitation or not, I know not. One thing I know. I quit the situation in Europe the most to my taste and the most for my health, for one that will probably be agreeable to neither. I exchange a quiet, cheerful mind, for an anxious one, and a life of ease for a scene of perplexity, confusion, and fatigue. If the public, however, should derive any benefit from it, I shall not regret it.

Dr. Franklin has leave to return, and talks of embarking next month. Mr. Jefferson is minister plenipotentiary at Versailles in his stead. Our commissions to negotiate commercial treaties remain in force, and we shall continue that business, Mr. Jefferson and I, as usual. We shall concert all affairs by letter, and meet together to sign, in London or Paris, as may be convenient, or sign the treaties separately, if we cannot meet. The communication between the Hague and London will be short and more frequent, and I hope to hear from you often.

My family send their respects to yours. My son is to take leave of us to-morrow morning, and may heaven's blessings attend him. Remember him and his father to all our good friends, whom you know very well.

With great respect,

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Auteuil, 13 May, 1785.

Sir, — We meet, as you know very well, so often with foreign ministers, at Court and at other places, and have so many transient conversations upon subjects in which America is more or less concerned, that I scarcely know when it is worth while to transmit them to you and when it is not. There is danger on one hand of degenerating into minuteness, and on the other, of omitting something which may be of consequence.

The Duke of Dorset has been, in general, very civil to Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jefferson, and me, and, I believe I may say with exact truth, that he has shown us as much respect and attention as he has to the ministers of any power whatever; but since the English papers, from the gazettes of New York, have published my appointment to his Court, he has been more assiduous, if I may use that expression, than ever.

He congratulated me, at Court, very politely, on my appointment, and said if he could be of any service to me, in public or private, by writing to Mr. Pitt or Lord Carmarthen, or to any of his private friends, it would give him pleasure to do it. I thanked his Grace in general terms, and said it was very possible he might be of service to me, and to his own country, too, as well as mine, if his Grace and his humble servant thought alike upon certain points. He thought then, as well as I, that it was proper we should compare notes; and said he would come out to Auteuil and see me on Saturday at twelve. Accordingly he came, and, repeating his professions of good will and his offers of service, I told his Lordship I did not mean to give him the trouble of any official representations, but, as he was willing to enter into private conversation with me upon affairs, I might ask what could be the reason why the posts upon our frontiers were not evacuated. He said, he could not

tell. I added, there had undoubtedly been full time, and it could not but be considered as inconsistent with the treaty; that he might well imagine it must be a tender point with us, and that jealousies and apprehensions would be very justly kept alive among all our people until the treaty was fulfilled in this particular. He seemed wholly at a loss upon this subject, and did not incline to compromise himself by hazarding any opinion.

I then mentioned the debts, and said it was certainly for the mutual advantage of both sides that we should come to an explanation upon that article; that to let loose the law, and perhaps the inflamed passions of some creditors upon the debtors and their estates, might ruin the latter without paying the former; that if execution was served upon the person of a debtor for want of estate, by the ancient as well as modern laws, he might, in a stated period, obtain his liberty upon his oath, and then the debt would be lost. If execution should be levied upon estate, it must be sold at vendue, and, in the present scarcity of money, would not be sold for half its value, so that the creditor might lose as well as the debtor; that it would surely be better for both countries, as well as for creditor and debtor, that the latter should be allowed time to turn himself, and make the most of his property. The Duke replied, that if the matter should be represented in this light, and made appear to be so, perhaps the ministry and the creditors might be satisfied; but, he added, interest should be paid. I answered, that the question concerning interest would not be changed at all by a delay; it would be the same, whether the principal were paid now or some time hence. But I found his Lordship here again unwilling to hazard any opinion of his own.

I then mentioned the negroes, and asked why the treaty was so little attended to in this article. He asked, whether any considerable number had been carried off. I answered, a very great number; and not only against the treaty, but confessedly so, for that Sir Guy Carleton had, at the time of his carrying them away, acknowledged it to be against the treaty; but alleged that their treaties with the negroes obliged them to do it, and, therefore, they must pay for them. I added, that this made it still harder upon the American debtors, and, indeed, made it perfectly just for them to withhold payment, because

that the property of many of them was thus wrongfully withheld from them; property by which they might have been enabled to pay at least much of their debts. But I found that either his Grace had not thought much upon these subjects, or that his prudence restrained him from speaking freely, and he chose to wave particulars, by repeating offers of his service. I replied, that I did not think it was proper for me to desire his Grace to make any official representations, because my first address of that kind should be made to Lord Carmarthen; but that noblemen and gentlemen of high rank were often here and in company with his Grace, and as conversation turned often upon American affairs, it might be in his Grace's power to rectify many mistakes relative to these subjects. It would be still more in his power by his private correspondences. I could not, however, obtain any specific promises; but he concluded by more general assurances, that he sincerely wished that all questions might be settled to mutual satisfaction, and entire harmony and affection restored, &c. &c.

A few days after, the Duke came out a second time to see me at Auteuil, and brought me some letters to the custom-house at Dover, which he believed would save me any troublesome visits of those gentry, and said he had written to Mr. Pitt, to desire him to send an order to the custom-house which would certainly answer the end.

He then told me, I must be in London time enough to pay my respects to the King on the 4th of June, his birthday; that to that end I must carry over from hence a fine new coat, ready made, for that it was a rule of etiquette there for everybody who went to Court to have new clothes upon that day, and very rich ones, and that my family must be introduced to the Queen. I told him I was sorry to hear that, but that I hoped it was not indispensable, for that as at the Court of Versailles the families of ambassadors only were required to be presented, and ministers plenipotentiary and envoys had their option, my family had chosen to avoid it here for many reasons. He said it was true, that here the etiquette required only the presentation of ambassadresses; but in England it was otherwise, and the ladies and daughters of all ministers must be presented to the Queen.

I hope, sir, you will not think this an immaterial or a trifling conversation, when you consider that the single circumstance of

presenting a family to Court will make a difference of several hundred pounds sterling in my inevitable annual expenses. This is not the first serious lecture that I have had upon the subjects of etiquette, and even dress. I have formerly related to you in conversation another much more grave, which I had five years ago from the Count de Vergennes. I believe I have also repeated to you similar exhortations made to me, even by the best patriots in Holland. There is a certain appearance in proportion to rank, which all the courts of Europe make a point of exacting from everybody who is presented to them.

I need not say to you, sir, because you know it perfectly well, that American ministers have never yet been able to make this appearance at any court. They are now less able to do it than ever. I lament this necessity of consuming the labor of my fellow-citizens upon such objects, as much as any man living; but I am sure that the debasing your ministers so much below their rank will one day have consequences of much more importance to the husbandman, artisan, and even laborer.

With the most cordial esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 27 May, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I found that either the Duke of Dorset's letter to the premier had produced an order at Dover, or that his Grace's letter to the custom-house office had had as good an effect, for I was allowed to pass without molestation, and, indeed, I received marks of particular respect.

We arrived yesterday in the afternoon, and, as fortune would have it, Colonel Smith arrived the night before. We soon met. I wrote a card to the Marquis of Carmarthen, at nine at night, acquainting his Lordship of my arrival, and desiring an hour to wait on him. This morning I had an answer, that his Lordship would be glad to see me at one at his house, or at four at his office, as I chose. I replied, that I would have the honor to wait on him at one. Colonel Smith went with me. We were admitted in an instant, and politely received. I laid before him my commission, and left him a copy. Colonel Smith did the same with his. I consulted his Lordship about the etiquette of

my letter of credence, and he gave me the same answers as the Comte de Vergennes gave you. His Lordship then said, that on Wednesday next, after the levee, I should be presented to his Majesty, in his closet, and there deliver my letter of credence; and that, on the next levee-day, Colonel Smith would be presented. This, he said, was according to usage.

I have since seen the Dutch minister, who inquired of every particular, step by step, and then said I was received precisely upon the same footing with all the other ministers. I learned from the Dutch minister, too, another particular which gave me pleasure, namely, — that the usage here is directly contrary to that in Holland and France. Here the new minister receives the first visit from all the foreign ministers; whereas, in France and Holland, the new minister makes the first visit to all the foreign ministers, and notifies formally to them his reception. This saves me from an embarrassment, and we shall now see who will and who will not. We shall see what will be done by imperial ministers, &c.

With the most cordial esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 30 May, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I have redeemed a moment from a multitude of avocations at this critical time, to acknowledge the receipt by Colonel Smith of your letters of the 31st of March, with the resolutions of congress inclosed of the 21st of March. As M. de St. Saphorin is many months ago recalled from the Hague, I shall make inquiry after him, and, if I cannot find where he is, I shall communicate a copy of the resolution to the Danish minister here, by whom it will be transmitted to his Court, which I suppose will be an execution of my instructions as near the spirit of them as it is now practicable. The liberal decision of his Danish Majesty, respecting the ordination of American candidates for holy orders in the Episcopal church, called the Church of England, as soon as it was known in England, produced a more liberal spirit and decision here than had prevailed before, so that I hope that respectable body of our fellow-citi-

zens who are interested in it have derived a benefit from it. I am much obliged to congress for this instance of their approbation, and for the honor they have done me in transmitting an account of it to the executives of the States.[1]

I have received, too, your letter of 13th of April, 1785, with the resolve of congress of 14th of February, 1785, empowering your ministers to apply a sum not exceeding eighty thousand dollars to the use of treating with Morocco, &c. But I have heard nothing of Captain Lamb, or the papers by him. What my colleagues will judge proper to do I cannot say; but the advice of the French Court was conformable to the opinion of us all, — that it will be indispensable for congress to send a consul with full powers.

I received at Auteuil my commission, instructions, and letter of credence to the Court of Great Britain, and have now received by Colonel Smith the papers sent by him.

I received at Auteuil the ratification of the last loan in Holland, which I transmitted immediately to Amsterdam, where it has been received, registered, and communicated to the lenders of the money, and has given them satisfaction, since which I have received from you, sir, duplicate and triplicate of the same ratification. The cipher is received, and shall be attended to.

Your ministers have written monthly an account of their proceedings. Not one packet has been missed; but when I left Auteuil we had no certain evidence that any one of our letters had been received. We supposed that this was because congress had not completed their instructions upon any of them; but I must beg the favor of you, sir, barely to mention the receipt of my letters, and their dates, although you may not be prepared to answer them. Without this one loses the chain of correspondence.

I have been visited by some gentlemen, who, I suppose, had seen the ministers, and learned from them what to say to me. They said that the ministry and the King considered the appointment of a minister as a proof of a conciliating disposition; that it was a relief to them from an anxiety, &c., and that they were fully determined to receive me in all respects like all the other foreign ministers. This, I believe is

[1] See page 231.

true; but we must be cautious what consequences we draw from it. It by no means follows that they are determined to do what their honor and their public faith oblige them to do according to our ideas of their obligations. It by no means follows that they will surrender the posts, restore the negroes, relieve the debtors, or make any equitable treaty of commerce. I hope they will do all these things; but I can ascertain nothing until my character is acknowledged by a public reception and audience of his Majesty, I have made my visits to his ministers, and have had time to enter into a candid discussion of these questions. You shall be punctually informed from step to step.

With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

P. S. This morning Sir Clement Cottrell Dormer, master of the ceremonies, called upon me to inform me that he was ordered to attend me to Court on Wednesday, as he did on all foreign ministers at their first presentation, to show them the way through the apartments, &c.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Bath Hotel, Westminster, 1 June, 1785.

Dear Sir, — In my letter of the 29th ultimo, I inclosed copies of the letters which had passed between the secretary of state and myself, wherein this day was fixed upon for my introduction to his Majesty. Agreeable to that arrangement, the master of ceremonies waited on me at one, and accompanied me to the secretary's office, from whence Lord Carmarthen accompanied me to the palace. I was in a very short time introduced to the King's closet, where, with the usual ceremony, I presented my letter of credence to his Majesty, and, after a few minutes' conversation, retired. I have only time to observe, sir, that I was introduced with every necessary formality, and received with some marks of attention.

The door being now opened, I may perhaps soon have it in my power to form some opinion respecting the general disposi-

tion of the King and his ministers, relative to the objects of my mission, of which you may expect the earliest communication.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Bath Hotel, Westminster, 2 June, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — During my interview with the Marquis of Carmarthen, he told me that it was customary for every foreign minister, at his first presentation to the King, to make his Majesty some compliments conformable to the spirit of his letter of credence; and when Sir Clement Cottrell Dormer, the master of the ceremonies, came to inform me that he should accompany me to the secretary of state and to Court, he said that every foreign minister whom he had attended to the Queen had always made a harangue to her Majesty, and he understood, though he had not been present, that they always harangued the King.

On Tuesday evening, the Baron de Lynden called upon me, and said he came from the Baron de Nolken, and they had been conversing upon the singular situation I was in, and they agreed in opinion that it was indispensable that I should make a speech, and that that speech should be as complimentary as possible. All this was conformable to the advice lately given by the Count de Vergennes to Mr. Jefferson; so that, finding it was a custom established at both these great Courts, and that this Court and the foreign ministers expected it, I thought I could not avoid it, although my first thought and inclination had been to deliver my credentials silently and retire.

At one, on Wednesday, the master of ceremonies called at my house, and went with me to the secretary of state's office, in Cleveland Row, where the Marquis of Carmarthen received me, and introduced me to his under secretary, Mr. Fraser, who has been, as his Lordship told me, uninterruptedly in that office, through all the changes in administration for thirty years, having first been appointed by the Earl of Holderness. After a short conversation upon the subject of importing my effects from Holland and France free of duty, which Mr. Fra-

ser himself introduced, Lord Carmarthen invited me to go with him in his coach to Court. When we arrived in the antechamber, the *œil de bœuf* of St. James's, the master of the ceremonies met me and attended me, while the secretary of state went to take the commands of the King. While I stood in this place, where it seems all ministers stand upon such occasions, always attended by the master of ceremonies, the room very full of ministers of state, lords, and bishops, and all sorts of courtiers, as well as the next room, which is the King's bedchamber, you may well suppose I was the focus of all eyes. I was relieved, however, from the embarrassment of it by the Swedish and Dutch ministers, who came to me, and entertained me in a very agreeable conversation during the whole time. Some other gentlemen, whom I had seen before, came to make their compliments too, until the Marquis of Carmarthen returned and desired me to go with him to his Majesty. I went with his Lordship through the levee room into the King's closet. The door was shut, and I was left with his Majesty and the secretary of state alone. I made the three reverences, — one at the door, another about half way, and a third before the presence, — according to the usage established at this and all the northern Courts of Europe, and then addressed myself to his Majesty in the following words: —

"Sir, — The United States of America have appointed me their minister plenipotentiary to your Majesty, and have directed me to deliver to your Majesty this letter which contains the evidence of it. It is in obedience to their express commands, that I have the honor to assure your Majesty of their unanimous disposition and desire to cultivate the most friendly and liberal intercourse between your Majesty's subjects and their citizens, and of their best wishes for your Majesty's health and happiness, and for that of your royal family. The appointment of a minister from the United States to your Majesty's Court will form an epoch in the history of England and of America. I think myself more fortunate than all my fellow-citizens, in having the distinguished honor to be the first to stand in your Majesty's royal presence in a diplomatic character; and I shall esteem myself the happiest of men, if I can be instrumental in recommending my country more and more to your Majesty's royal benevo-

lence, and of restoring an entire esteem, confidence, and affection, or, in better words, the old good nature and the old good humor between people, who, though separated by an ocean, and under different governments, have the same language, a similar religion, and kindred blood.

"I beg your Majesty's permission to add, that, although I have some time before been intrusted by my country, it was never in my whole life in a manner so agreeable to myself."

The King listened to every word I said, with dignity, but with an apparent emotion. Whether it was the nature of the interview, or whether it was my visible agitation, for I felt more than I did or could express, that touched him, I cannot say. But he was much affected, and answered me with more tremor than I had spoken with, and said: —

"Sir, — The circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary, the language you have now held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say that I not only receive with pleasure the assurance of the friendly dispositions of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their minister. I wish you, sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do, by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be very frank with you. I was the last to consent to the separation; but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power. The moment I see such sentiments and language as yours prevail, and a disposition to give to this country the preference, that moment I shall say, let the circumstances of language, religion, and blood have their natural and full effect."

I dare not say that these were the King's precise words, and, it is even possible, that I may have in some particular mistaken his meaning; for, although his pronunciation is as distinct as I ever heard, he hesitated some time between his periods, and between the members of the same period. He was indeed

much affected, and I confess I was not less so, and, therefore I cannot be certain that I was so cool and attentive, heard so clearly, and understood so perfectly, as to be confident of all his words or sense; and, I think, that all which he said to me should at present be kept secret in America, unless his Majesty or his secretary of state, who alone was present, should judge proper to report it. This I do say, that the foregoing is his Majesty's meaning as I then understood it, and his own words as nearly as I can recollect them.

The King then asked me whether I came last from France, and upon my answering in the affirmative, he put on an air of familiarity, and, smiling, or rather laughing, said, "there is an opinion among some people that you are not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France." I was surprised at this, because I thought it an indiscretion and a departure from the dignity. I was a little embarrassed, but determined not to deny the truth on one hand, nor leave him to infer from it any attachment to England on the other. I threw off as much gravity as I could, and assumed an air of gayety and a tone of decision as far as was decent, and said, "that opinion, sir, is not mistaken; I must avow to your Majesty, I have no attachment but to my own country." The King replied, as quick as lightning, "an honest man will never have any other."

The King then said a word or two to the secretary of state, which, being between them, I did not hear, and then turned round and bowed to me, as is customary with all kings and princes when they give the signal to retire. I retreated, stepping backward, as is the etiquette, and, making my last reverence at the door of the chamber, I went my way. The master of the ceremonies joined me the moment of my coming out of the King's closet, and accompanied me through the apartments down to my carriage, several stages of servants, gentlemen-porters and under-porters, roaring out like thunder, as I went along, "Mr. Adams's servants, Mr. Adams's carriage, &c." I have been thus minute, as it may be useful to others hereafter to know.

The conversation with the King congress will form their own judgment of. I may expect from it a residence less painful than I once expected, as so marked an attention from the King will silence many grumblers; but we can infer nothing from all this concerning the success of my mission.

There are a train of other ceremonies yet to go through, in presentations to the Queen, and visits to and from ministers and ambassadors, which will take up much time, and interrupt me in my endeavors to obtain all that I have at heart, — the objects of my instructions. It is thus the essence of things is lost in ceremony in every country of Europe. We must submit to what we cannot alter. Patience is the only remedy.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Bath Hotel, Westminster, 6 June, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Colonel Smith, on the 3d of this month, informed me that Colonel Forrest had been with him, in behalf of two gentlemen of Glasgow, — Mr. Colquhoun, Provost of that city, and Mr. Alexander Brown, — who were deputed by the merchants of that place who had debts in America, to confer with the creditors in London concerning an application to ministry and parliament to obtain their interposition for the recovery of their claims, but that, having heard of the appointment of a minister to this Court, and of my arrival, they were desirous of seeing me. I desired Colonel Smith to inform them that I should be glad to see them the next morning. Accordingly, on the 4th, they came, and Mr. Colquhoun informed me of his errand, and said he was very glad that congress had appointed a minister, because he hoped that the article of debts would now be accommodated to mutual satisfaction, without any application on their part, and he should be glad to return to Scotland without making any, provided he could be furnished with a reasonable account to give of himself to his constituents.

I told him I was obliged to him for having given me an opportunity to see him; that the merchants of Glasgow must be sensible we were but just emerged from an impoverishing war, in which there had been a great interruption of agriculture and commerce, and a still greater destruction of property, which rendered it difficult for any debtor, and impossible for many, to discharge their debts forthwith; that I was persuaded there was a general disposition to discharge the debts as fast as it could

be done, but that time and patience were as much for the interest of the creditors as the debtors; that if there had been any interposition of the governments in America, it had been, as I presumed, solely with a view of giving time to negotiate an explication of the article of the treaty, and to prevent the imprudence of hasty creditors from hurting themselves as well as the debtors, to no good end; that one principal object of my mission was to negotiate this affair with the minister, and, although I was not authorized by the debtors, and could not be impowered by congress to treat with the merchants of London and Glasgow, they might depend upon my devoting a full proportion of my time to this subject with the ministry, and should be always ready to hear any proposals, explanations, or arguments, even from individuals, and to transmit them to congress, if they were such as merited attention; that it was thought very hard and unreasonable in America, that interest should be insisted on during the war, and that if the creditors could be brought to consent to relinquish it, and that a reasonable time should be allowed, I thought the whole might be arranged to mutual benefit and satisfaction; that creditors should consider that there was a great demand for clothing, stock, and utensils, to repair the waste of war, and to put estates into a condition to produce, and to set commerce in motion; that this, together with the zeal to pay as much of their debts as possible, had already raised the interest of money even to an alarming height; that it must be better to allow the debtor time to turn himself, that he might pay all, rather than press him suddenly, so that he might not be able to pay more than a part; that if property were seized upon now, it might not produce half its value, whereas, left in the hands of the present possessor, it would enable him to employ it to such advantage as to pay his debts in time.

Mr. Colquhoun made no particular reply to the subject of interest, but said the merchants of Glasgow were fully sensible of the circumstances I had mentioned, and were very willing to wait, and they were desirous of entering into some agreement that the debts should be paid in five years by instalments, one fifth in a year; but they were alarmed at the spirit of migration into the wilderness of America; they thought it wrong to be restrained from arresting the person or attaching property of

a debtor whom they saw about to remove to Kentucky and other places, where they could never be come at. I told him, that this was new to me; but that Kentucky and all other new settlements were under the laws and jurisdiction of some State, as I supposed, and, therefore, the debtor and his property would be within the reach of the creditor as much as if he remained in the cities and old settlements; and, as those removals commonly advanced the fortune of the emigrant, it might be rather a benefit to his creditors, by increasing the ability to pay. I subjoined that there were two things which fell very hard upon the debtors in the States of Virginia and New York (for he had mentioned these particularly). One was, the great number of negroes which had been carried away. If these negroes had been restored according to the treaty, they would have been at work to earn money to pay their master's debts, but the carrying them off was a double loss to the owner; and the holding possession of the posts upon the frontiers had kept out of our hands a valuable trade, which would have gone a great way to enable us to pay our debts.

He said he thought it a very foolish thing to hold possession of the posts, &c.; that he would venture to return to Scotland, and would take no more measures about applying to parliament, which he was sensible must excite a clamor; and he hoped the merchants of Glasgow would be contented to wait. He seemed to be well pleased with the conversation, and took his leave in good humor, so that I think it very lucky that so noisy a business as a petition to parliament should be so easily diverted at this critical moment.

But I am unfortunate in another respect, as my Lord Carmarthen is ill of a fever, so that I shall not, I fear, be able to commence conferences with him upon business so soon as hoped. No time shall be lost by me.

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 7 Juin, 1785.

MONSIEUR, — Je me vois honoré des vôtres du 11, 18, et 29 Mai. Je sens l'incongruité qu'il y auroit à venir prendre congé

sans lettres de rappel, et j'ai soin de la faire sentir aussi à tous ceux qui m'en parlent. J'espère que M. Franklin conservera autant de vigueur de corps, qu'il en montre d'esprit en s'embarquant à 80 ans.

Je serois bien aise que vous eussiez la bonté de me marquer la conduite que vous désirez, monsieur, que je tienne avec Sir James Harris quand il reviendra ici. Lorsqu'il vint déployer son caractère, il fit annoncer son arrivée à tous, grands et petits; mais il ne fit rien dire ni à l'hôtel des États Unis ni chez moi. J'en conclus alors, que nous devions être comme deux paralleles qui, étant prolongées dans une même direction, ne se touchent jamais. Mais comme ceci ne regarde que le besoin personnel que nous ne pouvons avoir l'un de l'autre, je suis prêt, toutes les fois que le service des États Unis en profiteroit, à aller chez lui lorsque vous le souhaiterez.

Quant aux affaires de la République externes, elles continuent de traîner en longueur. Les internes sont poussées avec plus de vigueur. Vendredi il y a eu une résolution, quant à Rotterdam, fort désagréable au statdholder et ses créatures, et une proposition d'Amsterdam, rendue tout de suite commissoriale, encore plus alarmante pour lui. Sa commission de capitaine-général lui donne le commandement, mais non la direction, de l'armée. Il s'étoit emparé de la dernière, comme de bien d'autres choses. Il y a tout à parier que dans peu il sera mis ordre à cela. Les affaires dans l'empire sont dans une crise, dont je pourrai peut-être bientôt vous apprendre le développement, &c. &c.

Dumas.

P. S. J'allois faire partir cette lettre, lorsqu'un ami, au sortir de l'assemblée de Leur Hautes Puissances, dont il est membre, est venu amicalement et confidentiellement m'avertir, que L. H. P. ont reçu de Londres la nouvelle de l'audience et présentation de V. E. comme ministre des États Unis près de sa Majesté Brittanique; que cette démarche a étonné et blessé L. H. P.; qu'on a trouvé que ce n'est ni décent, ni dans l'ordre, d'envoyer et accréditer un ministre accrédité près d'une puissance, sans en donner connoissance ni explication à celle-ci, chez une autre puissance; qu'on a cité à cette occasion, dans l'assemblée, un Roi de Suède, qui prit un pareil procédé pour affront et hosti-

lite ; que dans les débats que cela a occasionnés, quelques bien intentionnés et modérés (entre autres, l'ami, que je vous ferai connoître dans la suite) ont opiné de charger M. Fagel de m'entretenir là-dessus, et d'ajuster l'affaire avec moi de manière que L. H. P. eussent contentement ; mais que le sentiment d'autres, aisés à deviner, a prévalu, savoir, de faire écrire directement à leur ministre à Londres, pour savoir si M. Adams, qui vient d'avoir audience, &c. près de sa Majesté Brittannique, étoit le même qui se trouvoit toujours accrédité chez eux, ou un autre de même nom. On m'a fait part de tout cela expressément pour vous l'apprendre sans délai ; et l'on est d'avis que la chose pourroit peut-être se raccommoder encore, sans un éclat désagréable et à V. E. et au congrès, si vous écriviez et faisiez présenter incessamment une lettre à L. H. P. où vous leur exposeriez votre cas, et les raisons propres à disculper le congrès. Je m'acquitte fort à la hâte. De votre excellence le susdit

C. W. F. Dumas.

M. DUMAS TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 8 Juin, 1785.

Monsieur, — J'ai la satisfaction de pouvoir vous annoncer que tout est à peu près raccommodé. Je dis, à peu près ; car il faudra toujours écrire, le plutôt le mieux, a Leur Hautes Puissances la lettre en question, où vous leur exposerez le cas. La résolution avoit passé hier, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le mander. Mais comme la résomption devoit s'en faire aujourd'hui avant d'être arrêtée, on revint un peu à la proposition des modérés, d'avoir une explication avec moi. En conséquence M. Fagel m'a envoyé prier ce matin de passer chez lui a dix heures ; ce qu'ayant fait, il m'a exposé la sensibilité de L. H. P., et demandé si M. Adams, accrédité et admis tout récemment auprès de sa Majesté Britannique, étoit le même qui étoit accrédité auprès d'eux. Je l'ai prié de me dire, s'il me faisoit la question comme M. Fagel, ou comme M. le Greffier. Il m'a dit, j'ai ordre de vous le demander *de la part de L. H. P.* J'ai donc, lui ai je dit, un double et triple motif de vous dire la vérité ; la voici en trois mots. *C'est le même.* J'ai poursuivi,

qu'il m'étoit aisé de vous justifier provisionellement, en attendant que vous le fissiez vous-même par lettre à L. H. P.; et là-dessus je lui ai lu ce que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me dire sur ce sujet dans vos lettres de Paris du 11 et du 18 Mai. Il a été très content de la manière dont vous exprimez votre embarras dans les deux passages, en ajoutant; "J'ai bien dit que M. Adams étoit honnête, et incapable de manquer à L. H. P. Je vous prie de lui faire mes complimens, et de l'assurer de mes sentimens d'estime et d'amitié pour lui." Je lui ai lu ensuite ce qu'il convenoit de la minute de mon susdit postscrit, qu'il a approuvé. Il m'a dit alors, qu'il avoit écrit hier provisionellement à M. de Linde, de s'informer; mais que L. H. P. avoient trouvé bon, au lieu d'arrêter une résolution, de prendre la chose *ad notam;* en d'autres termes, de la rendre *commissoriale*, si les explications que je pourrai donner se trouvoient satisfaisantes; ce dont il ne doutoit pas, si je voulois lui donner extrait de ces lettres, pour le produire immédiatement à l'assemblée. Comme le temps étoit court, et qu'il n'y avoit rien d'ailleurs dans les deux lettres, qui ne pût être vu d'un chacun, j'ai pris le parti de lui confier les originaux (ce que M. de Verac, à qui je l'ai raconté, a approuvé). Il me les renverra.

J'ai couru delà à un autre bout de la ville, instruire l'ami d'hier, qui alloit sortir pour se rendre à l'assemblée. Mon attention lui a fait plaisir. Après diner j'ai appris que la prise *ad notam* a eu lieu. M. Fagel m'a dit aussi, que le Roi de Suède en question étoit celui d'aujourd'hui; le ministre dont il se croyoit offensé, M. de Linde actuellement à Londres; et celui qui cita ce trait hier à l'assemblée, M. son père, de Blitterswyck. Il m'a dit aussi que quelques têtes chaudes avoient opiné de rappeler M. Van Berckel.

La proposition d'Amsterdam, dont je vous ai parlé, et un terrible mémoire de M. le Comte de Maillebois, qui l'a suivie de près, vont, selon toute apparence, produire l'établissement d'un département militaire, qui diminuera prodigieusement certaine influence.

La crise en Allemagne continue de mûrir. Je viens de déchiffrer une lettre interessante là-dessus. Mais ceci fort entre nous.

P. S. du 10e Juin. M. le Greffier Fagel, en me rendant ce matin les deux lettres susdites, m'a dit, que l'éponge est passée

sur toute cette affaire, et que L. H. P. ont ordonné de la *rayer même des notes.* Cela vous rendra, monsieur, la lettre de politesse, qu'il est toujours et d'autant plus à propos d'écrire, encore plus aisée. Permettez, &c.

C. W. F. Dumas.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Bath Hotel, Westminster, 10 June, 1785.

Sir, — Yesterday, the 9th of the month, I was presented to the Queen by my Lord Ailesbury, her lord-chamberlain, having been attended to his Lordship and introduced to him by the master of the ceremonies. The Queen was attended by her ladies, and I made my compliments to her Majesty in the following words: —

" Madam, — Among the many circumstances which have rendered my mission to his Majesty desirable to me, I have ever considered it as a principal one, that I should have an opportunity of making my court to a great Queen, whose royal virtues and talents have ever been acknowledged and admired in America, as well as in all the nations of Europe, as an example to princesses and the glory of her sex. Permit me, madam, to recommend to your Majesty's royal goodness a rising empire and an infant virgin world. Another Europe, madam, is rising in America. To a philosophical mind, like your Majesty's, there cannot be a more pleasing contemplation, than the prospect of doubling the human species, and augmenting, at the same time, their prosperity and happiness. It will, in future ages, be the glory of these kingdoms to have peopled that country, and to have sown there those seeds of science, of liberty, of virtue, and permit me, madam, to add, of piety, which alone constitute the prosperity of nations and the happiness of the human race.

"After venturing upon such high insinuations to your Majesty, it seems to be descending too far to ask, as I do, your Majesty's royal indulgence to a person who is indeed unqualified for courts, and who owes his elevation to this distinguished honor of standing before your Majesty, not to any circumstances of illustrious birth, fortune, or abilities, but merely to an ardent devotion to

his native country, and some little industry and perseverance in her service."

The Queen answered me in these words: — "I thank you, sir, for your civilities to me and my family, and am glad to see you in this country."

The Queen then asked me if I had provided myself with a house. I answered, I have agreed for one, madam, this morning. She then made her courtesy, and I made my reverence and retired into the drawing-room, where the King, Queen, Princess Royal, and the younger princess, her sister, all spoke to me very obligingly. I attended until the drawing-room was over, and then returned home.

It has been necessary, in order to guard against false reports and malicious fictions, to reduce to writing what was said in my audiences of the King and Queen, and it is the custom of all ministers to transmit these compliments to their Courts. I transmit them to you in cipher, that they may be exposed to as little criticism as possible.

As the Court knew very well that the eyes of all nations were fixed upon these audiences, it may be fairly concluded from them, that it is the intention of the royal family and of ministers to treat America like other foreign powers; but our inferences can go no farther. We cannot infer from this, that they will relax their navigation act for us, any more than for France. We are sure of one thing, that a navigation act is in our power, as well as in theirs, and that ours will be more hurtful to them than theirs to us. In short, it is scarcely possible to calculate to what a height of naval power a navigation act would raise the United States in a few years.

With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO M. FAGEL.

London, 10 June, 1785.

Sir, — I have the honor to inform you that I have received from congress a letter of credence to his Britannic Majesty as minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America, and

that I have had the honor of presenting that letter to his Majesty, and of being received in that character.

I have received, too, authentic information that congress have resolved that it is expedient to appoint a minister to succeed me at the Hague; but I have not received my letter of recall, nor news of the actual appointment of a successor. This, sir, is the only reason why I did not, and could not, come to the Hague, and take a formal leave of their High Mightinesses and of his Most Serene Highness, as I wished. It is still my intention to come, or to take leave, by a respectful letter, whenever my letter of recall shall arrive, or a successor.

My being appointed to other service upon this occasion is no new thing. I was, last August, received at the Court of Versailles, as minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America to his Most Christian Majesty, which was never considered, any more than intended, as any failure of respect to the Republic. For myself and for my country I know that respect, esteem, and affection to the Republic is engraven on all our hearts.

I beg, then, the favor of your advice, if you think it proper and necessary for me to take any farther steps upon this occasion before my letter of recall, or my successor, shall arrive.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

M. FAGEL TO JOHN ADAMS.

La Haie, 14 Juin, 1785.

MONSIEUR, — Je viens de recevoir la lettre dont vous m'avez honoré le 10 de ce mois. Je considère comme une marque particulière de l'estime que vos merites vous ont acquis, que le congrès vous a nommé pour leur ministre plénipotentiaire auprès de sa Majesté Britannique; et je suis fâché que nous perdons par là la résidence d'une personne, qui s'est rendu très agréable chez nous, et qui par ses manières honnêtes se seroit rendu de plus en plus estimable. Il faut espérer que celui qui vous succedera aura les mêmes bonnes qualités. Je ne saurois vous déguiser qu'on a fait quelques réflexions ici sur ce que vous aviez remis vos lettres de créance au Roi d'Angleterre, avant que d'avoir présenté vos lettres de rappel aux états-généraux.

J'ai même été chargé d'en entretenir M. Dumas, votre sécrétaire, qui m'en a donné telle explication, que, sur le rapport que j'en ai fait à l'assemblé, on a cru devoir s'en contenter.

Lorsque vous recevrez vos lettres de rappel, ce ne pourra être que très agréable à leurs Hautes Puissances que vous les présentiez en personne. Si les circonstances de vos affaires ne le permettent point, il suffira de le faire par un mémoire adressé aux états-généraux. Vous pouvez être persuadé, monsieur, que la réponse que leurs H. P. y feront, ne servira qu'a témoigner leur égard pour le congrès, et leur désir de cimenter, de plus en plus, l'union et la bonne intelligence dans laquelle elles ont le bonheur de vivre avec eux. J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

H. Fagel.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Westminster, 17 June, 1785.

Sir, — At three o'clock, according to appointment, I went to the secretary of state's office in Cleveland Row, St. James's, and was immediately received by the Marquis of Carmarthen.

His Lordship began the conversation, by saying that he could answer for himself, and he believed for the rest of the King's servants, that they were sincerely desirous of cultivating the most cordial friendship with America, and of doing every thing in their power for dissipating every little animosity that might remain among individuals. In return, I told his Lordship that I was glad to hear such assurances from him and the other ministers, that I was very confident that the people of the United States had correspondent dispositions, and that I had sanguine hopes that in a short time all remaining difficulties would be amicably settled; that, to this end, I was charged by congress with several particulars which had hitherto given some uneasiness, but which, upon a candid discussion, might be easily accommodated, as I hoped, to mutual satisfaction; that there were six principal points to be discussed with his Lordship. The first, and perhaps the most pressing, was the posts and territories within the limits of the United States, which were still held by British garrisons; the exportation of negroes and other American property, which, by the seventh article of the treaty of peace, was not to be exported; the tendency of the restric-

tions on our trade to incapacitate our merchants to make remittances to theirs; the losses of our merchants as well as theirs, if we were unseasonably pressed for the payment of debts contracted before the war; the construction of the armistice of 20th January, 1783, and the decision of questions of captures made after the expiration of the month; and the liquidation of the charges of prisoners of war. These were the general heads. The great question of the commerce between the countries, involving so many interests, and those of so important and so permanent a nature, might be attended with the most difficulties, and require the longest time to be adjusted; but all the others appeared to be so clear and easy, that I hoped they might soon be finished; that, however, having barely opened to his Lordship the principal matters of negotiation, I should not enlarge upon all of them at present. That the debts seemed to be a leading point, because they were intimately connected with all the others. The withholding the posts, the exportation of so many negroes, the restrictions on our trade, the misconstruction of the armistice, and the delay of liquidating the charges of prisoners, had all contributed very much to obstruct our merchants in their honest exertions to discharge their debts to the merchants of Great Britain; that it could not be unknown to his Lordship, that the withholding the posts had withheld from our merchants a very profitable fur trade which we justly considered as our right; that the furs which would have been obtained, if the posts had been in our hands, would have come to England in payment of debts to the amount probably of several hundred thousand pounds; and his Lordship must be sensible that one hundred thousand pounds a year more would have gone a great way towards contenting the creditors of this country; that it was impossible to say what a difference had been made by carrying away the negroes which belonged chiefly to the Southern States, and, if the treaty had been observed, would have been at work on their master's plantations, so that not only their original value, but their labor and the profit upon their labor had been lost, all of which might and ought to have been applied to the payment of debts; that it was well known that a number of valuable vessels had been taken upon the coast of America, after the expiration of the month, and as yet withheld from the owners, who were

all probably debtors, which had incapacitated them so far to pay; that there was supposed to be a large balance in our favor in the account of the charges of prisoners, which being withheld, operated still to disable us on that account to do as we desired to do; that from all that I might be supposed to know of the character of the people of the United States, and from all the intelligence I could gather from all parts of them, I was persuaded that nothing lay with greater weight upon their minds than the payment of their debts; that they thought their moral characters, and their reputations as men, as well as their credit as merchants, concerned in it; that their zeal to make remittances had been such as to raise the interest of money to double its usual standard, to advance the price of bills of exchange to eight or ten per cent. above par, and to raise even the prices of the produce of the country to almost double its usual standard; that his Lordship well knew we had no other mines of gold and silver than our lands and seas; that large sums of the circulating cash we had, had been remitted to England in specie, and as much produce as could be purchased at almost any rate, but that this produce lay in magazines in London, because it would not fetch the price that was given for it in America; that the people of America were, nineteen twentieths of them, farmers; that these had sold their produce dearer, and purchased the manufactures of Europe cheaper, since the peace, than ever; but that the situation of the merchants both in America and in England, had been, and continued to be, very distressing. No political arrangements having been made, they had all expected that the trade would return to its old channels, and nearly under the same regulations; but they had been disappointed; British merchants had made large advances, and American merchants contracted large debts, both depending upon remittances in the usual articles and upon the old terms, but both had found themselves disappointed, and it was much to be feared that the consequence would be numerous failures; that the cash and bills had been chiefly remitted to the great loss and damage to the country; that remittances could not be made as heretofore, by reason of obstructions, restrictions, and imposts laid by Great Britain on our exports to Great Britain; that neither rice, tobacco, pitch, tar, turpentine, ships, oil, nor other articles, the great sources of

remittances formerly, could now be sent as heretofore, and the trade of the West Indies, formerly a vast source of remittance, was now obstructed; that, under all these circumstances, if the debtor should be immediately pressed by his British creditor, it would be a certain loss to both; that it was apprehended, among a number of creditors, there might be some, perhaps many, influenced by strong passions, by keen avidity, or by personal resentment, who might rashly make use of the law to the ruin of the debtor, without being able, however, to recover much of his debt.

Here his Lordship interrupted me, and said, I have seen one remarkable instance of the violence and unreasonableness of private resentment, when Mr. Chase was here from Maryland, in one of the trustees of the Maryland stock. Mr. Chase produced from the legislature of Maryland authority to make full compensation to a relation of that trustee for an estate that had been confiscated, but he would not accept it, though I told him he would not be able to prevent the claim of Maryland, but would probably hurt his own interest, or that of his relations. I told his Lordship I had yesterday received a letter from Mr. Paca, the governor of Maryland, relative to the claim of that State, and should be glad to do them any service with his Lordship or elsewhere, respecting that affair; that if his Lordship gave their full weight to all these considerations, he must see the motives and the necessity of restraining the impetuosity of creditors. His Lordship then read me, from a late petition to him from the merchants, an account of a bill lately brought into the assembly of Virginia, for paying the debts by instalments, which he understood had been lost by a sudden storm or frost. The merchants complained of the cutting off the interest during the war, for the long term of seven years, and of the restraint from preventing the alienation of property, or removal of debtors into the wilderness.

His Lordship heard me very attentively, and said that he hoped we should be able with patience and time to adjust all these things; that we should probably meet with many rubs in our way; that passion and private interest would sometimes be in our way on both sides; but while the ministers on both sides could keep right, he should think we might succeed; for his part, he was for attending to every consideration, and giving it

its just weight, and he desired me to give him in writing something to begin upon. He thought the affair of the posts the most pressing, and wished I would begin with that. I told his Lordship that I would let him know, between him and me, that I had instructions to require the evacuation of the posts and surrender of all our territory, but I wished to conduct the business with all the delicacy that was possible, and, therefore, I wished rather to inquire of his Lordship what were the intentions of his Majesty's ministers, and whether they had already expedited orders for the evacuation of the posts, &c. His Lordship said I must give him my inquiries in writing, that he might have a ground for making those inquiries himself, as it was an affair in another department. I agreed accordingly to make an office of it.

I shall at first confine myself to decent inquiries concerning the orders given or to be given, and if I receive positive assurances that explicit orders are gone to the governor and commander-in-chief in Canada to evacuate all the posts and territories, I shall content myself to wait; but if I do not obtain such explicit assurances, I shall think it my duty to present a memorial with a decent but firm requisition. I shall transmit to you, sir, every step of my progress; but I find it very tedious, and fear you will find it more so, to transmit particular circumstances in detail; when one looks over again a letter in which he has attempted it, he finds a multitude of things omitted, or but half represented. With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. I forgot one circumstance of some consequence. His Lordship said he had seen in the gazettes some proceedings at Boston which he was very sorry to see. I answered that I had seen them in the same gazettes, as I supposed, and had no more authentic account of them; that I had no authority to say any thing officially about them, but, as an individual, I might say that the observations I just had the honor to make to his Lordship, concerning the state of the commerce between the two countries, would be sufficient to explain to his Lordship the motives to those proceedings, and to convince his Lordship of the probability of such sentiments and proceedings becoming general throughout the United States, and alienating the com-

merce of that country from this, either by increasing manufactures in America, or opening new channels of commerce with other countries, which might easily be done, unless some arrangements were made which might facilitate remittances. It was so obviously the true policy of this country to facilitate remittances from America, and to encourage every thing we could send (as the Americans think), that when they find remittances discouraged, impeded, and even prohibited, it was natural to expect they would be alarmed, and begin to look out for other resources; that my fellow-citizens were very confident they had the power in their own hands to do themselves justice, as soon as they should find it denied them here; but I hoped the difficulties would all be removed here.

The whole conference was conducted with perfect good humor, and, on the part of his Lordship, with perfect politeness.

J. A.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Bath Hotel, Westminster, 26 June, 1785.

Dear Sir, — By the ninth article of the confederation, the United States, in congress assembled, have the sole and exclusive right and power of entering into treaties and alliances, provided that no treaty of commerce shall be made whereby the legislative power of the respective States shall be restrained from imposing such imposts and duties on foreigners as their own people are subjected to, or from prohibiting the exportation or importation of any species of goods or commodities whatsoever.

I have ventured, sir, in some former letters to you, notwithstanding the delicacy of tampering with the confederation, to suggest to your consideration, whether it may not be necessary for the States to reconsider this proviso, and give to congress unlimited authority to enter into treaties of commerce with foreign powers, at least for a limited term of years. I have also inquired, whether it might not be necessary for the States to confer upon congress authority to regulate the external commerce of all the members of the confederation for a like term of years.

If the States should hesitate at this, I am persuaded they

would readily comply with recommendations of congress to this effect. For example, if congress should recommend to the legislatures of the States to lay duties, heavy duties, upon all British vessels entering into or clearing out of their ports, especially upon all vessels coming from or bound to the West India Islands, Nova Scotia, Canada, or Newfoundland, and upon all merchandises imported from, or exported to, any part of the British dominions, I can scarcely doubt that every legislature would immediately comply; and by this means our own navigation would be encouraged, and the British discouraged to such a degree as to compel the British government to enter into an equitable treaty; nay, I cannot doubt the readiness of the States to comply with a recommendation of congress wholly to prohibit British vessels and merchandises.

Although I have been received here, and continue to be treated, with all the distinction which is due to the rank and title you have given me, there is, nevertheless, a reserve, which convinces me that we shall have no treaty of commerce until this nation is made to feel the necessity of it. I am every day astonished at the ignorance of all ranks of people of the relation between this country and ours. "*Cui bono?*" they cry, "to what end a treaty of commerce, when we are sure of as much American trade as we have occasion for, without it? The experiment has been tried, and the Americans have found that they cannot supply themselves elsewhere; there must be *quid pro quo;* and what have the United States to give in exchange for the liberty of going in their own ships to our sugar colonies and our colonies upon the continent?" These smart reasoners are answered, "The Americans allow Britons to come in their own vessels to all their ports in the United States, and this is more than a *quid* for your *quo*. This is the true reciprocity; and while we allow you this liberty, we have a right to demand it in return."

"But," replies the Briton, "you cannot avoid this; you have no government; you cannot agree to prohibit our ships and goods, or to lay duties on them." "Then," says the American, "you give up the argument of reciprocity; you confess that you are not willing to allow us a *quid* for your *quo*, and that you are disposed to take advantage of our supposed disunion to get unequal benefits from us; but you will find yourselves disappointed in this disunion that you build so much upon. Nothing but

too much good nature to you, and too high an opinion of your wisdom, has prevented the States hitherto from uniting in a reciprocal discouragement of your ships and goods; but when the Americans find themselves deceived, you will soon see them too much united for your purposes."

Such have been the dialogues in conversation for a year or two, and these ignorant sophisms of the Britons will never be confuted to any effect, until vigorous measures are taken by all the States in concert. Whatever measures are taken, I should recommend them to be taken upon this express proviso, to continue in force only until things shall be otherwise settled by a treaty of commerce.

I receive sometimes unexpected visits from persons, who, I suppose, are sent on purpose to say things to me, which they wish no doubt to have transmitted to you. Since the appearance of the resolutions of the merchants, traders, and mechanics of Boston, I have several times fallen into company with persons, whose connections I knew, and who have assumed very grave faces, and inquired about the disturbances at Boston, as they call them, and given very sage hints of their fears, that those proceedings would obstruct my success. A few days since, my servant announced Lord Hood would be glad to see me, if I was at leisure. I desired his Lordship might walk up. I was surprised, that among so many visits of ceremony, his Lordship should not be content with leaving his card. But in the year 1768, I had appeared before him, then Commodore Hood, in a special court of admiralty, for the trial of four sailors for killing Lieutenant Panton in defending themselves from his press-gang; his Lordship took advantage of this very transient acquaintance of seventeen years standing, to make me a friendly visit; he soon began a conversation about the Boston proceedings; it is not necessary to repeat what was said, as it was of no consequence for you to know, excepting that his Lordship was very sorry to see the account of those proceedings; was very much afraid they would obstruct the return of friendship, and prove a bar to what he wished to see, — a good treaty of commerce. I told his Lordship that those proceedings were prefaced with, "whereas there is no treaty of commerce," and, as I understood them, they were not to be in force any longer than there should be no treaty of commerce. His Lordship con-

cluded by saying, that the sooner such a treaty was made, the better. I had no doubt, then, and have been confirmed by others since in the opinion, that his Lordship did not come of his own head.

All parties are upon the reserve respecting American affairs; they are afraid of each other; and it is my clear opinion, that it is congress and the States, and they alone, who can enable me to do any thing effectual; I may reason till I die, to no purpose. It is unanimity in America in measures, which shall confute the British sophisms and make them feel, which will ever produce a fair treaty of commerce.

With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

Grosvenor Square, 14 July, 1785.

My Lord, — The twenty-second article of the preliminary treaty of peace between Great Britain and France, signed on the 20th of January, 1783, is in these words, namely — "In order to prevent all causes of complaint and dispute which may arise on account of prizes that may be taken at sea, after the signing of these preliminary articles, it is reciprocally agreed that the vessels and effects which may be taken in the channel and in the north seas, after the space of twelve days, to be computed from the ratification of those preliminary articles, shall be restored on each side. *That the term shall be one month from the channel and the north seas, as far as the Canary Islands* inclusively, whether in the ocean or in the Mediterranean; five months from the said Canary Islands as far as the said equinoctial line or equator; and, lastly, five months in all other parts of the world, without any exception or any other distinction more particular of time and place."

In the preliminary articles of peace between Great Britain and Spain, a cessation of hostilities was stipulated in the same manner. On the same 20th of January, it was agreed between the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty on the one part, and the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States of America on the other, that the subjects, citizens, and possessions

of both powers should be comprised in the suspension of arms above mentioned, and that they should consequently enjoy the benefits of the cessation of hostilities at the same periods and in the same manner as the three crowns aforesaid, and their subjects and possessions respectively. It appears, however, that many vessels which were taken after the expiration of one month from the 3d of February, 1783, the day of the ratification of the said preliminary articles, within that part of the ocean which lies between the channel and north seas and the Canary Islands, have not been restored; but, on the contrary, in some instances, such vessels have been condemned as lawful prizes, upon an opinion that the words "as far as," said to be used in the preliminary articles, meant the distance from Paris to the southernmost part of the Canaries.

It must be obvious to your Lordship, that this construction is extremely foreign from the intention of the contracting parties, who never had Paris in contemplation as a boundary of the region of one month, nor as any limit of a measure of distance; the channel and north seas being expressly marked as the northern boundary, and the southernmost Canary as the southern, and every part of the ocean, from the channel and north seas, up to the Canary Islands, inclusively, is comprehended.

Indeed, the words "as far as," are scarcely a proper translation of the words "*jusqu'aux*," in the article of the treaty. The original words are "*depuis la Manche et les Mers du nord jusqu'aux Isles Canaries*," and not "*depuis Paris jusqu'aux Isles*," *&c.*, *&c.*

The intention of the contracting parties is so clear, and their expression so plain, that it is not easy to account for the misinterpretation of them; but, as many lawsuits are depending upon the point, and several Americans are now in London waiting the decision of them, I do myself the honor to propose to your Lordship a particular convention to determine all these controversies on both sides, by inserting the words "*jusqu'à la latitude des Isles Canaries*," instead of "*jusqu'aux Isles Canaries*," and also the words "*depuis la latitude des dites Isles Canaries*," instead of "*depuis les dites Isles Canaries*," it being apparent from the mention of the Mediterranean, as in the same stage of one month between the channel and north seas on the north, and the Canaries on the south, and of the equinoctial line as the next

stage, that the line of latitude of the southern Canary was intended. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 18 July, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — Your favors of June 22 and July 7 and 11, are before me.[1] The delay of Mr. Lamb's arrival is unfortunate; but I think with you, that the sooner a project of treaties is prepared, the better, and I will give the earliest attention to it whenever you shall send it. I shall go this morning to Stockdale, to talk with him about sending you the newspapers and pamphlets through the channel of Cleveland Row; that is, Lord Carmarthen's office.

I agree with pleasure to the appointment made by the Doctor and you, of Mr. Short, to carry the treaty through London to the Hague, and in joining Dumas with him in making the exchange. A letter to him, and another to Mr. Dumas, signed by you and me, as the Doctor is gone, would be sufficient authority. But I should have no objection to giving each of them a more formal commission, under our hands and seals, to be our secretaries, especially *pro hâc vice*. He must carry our original commission to show to the Baron de Thulemeier, and a copy of it attested by Colonel Humphreys to deliver him; and Mr. Dumas and he should see the Prussian commission, and receive an attested copy of that. I do not think of any other papers necessary.

I have given to Lord Carmarthen, long ago, an explanation of the power of congress to form treaties of commerce, exactly conformable to that which you gave the English gentleman; but I did not extend it to the case of consuls. He asked me no questions concerning consuls, and I did not think it proper for me to say any thing on that subject, not having any instructions. But I am not easy on that head. Mr. Temple talks of going out in three or four weeks, but I am very apprehensive he will meet with the difficulties you foresee.

[1] These letters, together with most of Mr. Jefferson's part of this correspondence, are printed in the collection of his writings made in 1829, by T. J. Randolph.

(*The rest in Cipher, and kept secret.*)

I do not like the symptoms. Galloway, Deane, Chalmers, Watson, are too much in favor. The lottery for the tories, although perhaps in part inevitable, has been introduced with such pompous demonstrations of affection and approbation as are neither wise nor honest. There is too much attention to the navy; and there is another step which alarms my apprehensions. Hanover is joining Prussia, against the views of the two Imperial Courts, at least in Bavaria. Keep this as secret as the grave, but search it to the bottom among the foreign ministers where you are. Does this indicate a doubt whether our business with De Thulemeier may be delayed? Does it indicate a design in the British cabinet to be neutral, in order to be more at leisure to deal with us? Can it be a secret understanding between St. James's and Versailles? The design of ruining, if they can, our carrying trade, and annihilating all our navigation and seamen, is too apparent.

Yours, most sincerely,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 19 July, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — Give me leave to propose for your consideration, and to request you to submit to the decision of congress, whether it would not be proper that some measures should be taken to furnish your ministers abroad with the laws of the several States, and more especially with such laws as may have a relation to external commerce or any other foreign affair.

Information of this kind will be wanted at every Court, but more particularly here, and at this critical period. Our fellow-citizens here, from all the States, have been very civil to me, in furnishing me with all the lights in their power, and this will ever be the case, it is to be hoped, wherever you have a minister; yet all the lights which individuals abroad can furnish, will be imperfect, though ever so carefully collected by a minister, without the continual assistance of congress and the States. I have been lately obliged to a fellow-citizen, Captain C. Miller, for the laws of New York, of the second meeting of the eighth session of the legislature, among which, to my great satisfac-

tion, I find the United States in congress assembled vested for fifteen years with powers to prohibit any goods, wares, or merchandise from being imported into, or exported from, any of the United States, in vessels belonging to, or navigated by, the subjects of any power with whom these States shall not have formed treaties of commerce; and also with power of prohibiting the subjects of any foreign state, kingdom, or empire, unless authorized by treaty, from importing into the United States any goods, wares, or merchandise which are not the produce or manufacture of the dominions of the sovereign whose subjects they are.

I read this act with pleasure, because it is very nearly all that is wanting. The legislature of New York have avoided giving to the United States the power of imposing equalizing or retaliating duties, and I cannot say that they are not right in this, although it is very probable such duties will be indispensable. Such duties, if laid by any State, should be laid by all; and if the States will, in such cases, respect the recommendations of congress, this may be sufficient. If we enter into treaty with England, how shall we manage this subject? Shall we stipulate that Britain shall pay in our ports no higher duties than the most favored nations shall pay, in return for her stipulating that Americans shall pay in her ports no higher duties than the most favored nation pays? This would be unequal, because the most favored nation pays in British ports much greater imposts, than the nation the most favored by the United States pays in our ports. If we enter into such a stipulation, the consequence will be, that, in order to form an equality, we must impose enormous duties, not only upon British subjects, but upon all other nations. For example, the most favored nation pays in England upon oil eighteen pounds three shillings sterling per ton. If we attempt to equalize and retaliate, we must lay on the amount of this upon the importation of goods from all other nations, a measure that may be very inconvenient to us. Should we not then endeavor to obtain a stipulation that Americans shall pay, in British ports, no higher duties than British subjects? No doubt, to obtain this, we must stipulate that Britons shall pay, in our ports, no higher duties than our own citizens; and even this will be unequal, because that duties in general are higher in England than in America. This, however, can-

not be avoided, and, as it is our felicity, we have less cause to repine at it. But, if the British ministry should refuse to go farther than the mutual privilege of the most favored nation, we shall have no remedy but in equalizing duties, which it will be absolutely necessary to lay on, in order to do ourselves justice; this cannot be done, but by a concert of all the States; if such a concert can be effected by recommendations of congress, so much the better; if it cannot, I see no other remedy but to give congress the power.

This nation relies upon it, that our States can never accomplish such a concert, either by giving congress the power, or by complying with their recommendations. Proofs of this are innumerable. Lord Sheffield's writings, the constant strain of all the writings in the newspapers, the language of conversation, the report of the committee of council, but above all, the system adopted by the Duke of Portland's administration, and uniformly pursued by him and his successor, Mr. Pitt, are a demonstration of it. For, although many express a contempt of the American commerce, (and I am sorry to say that even Lord Camden has lately said, that while they had a monopoly of the American trade, it was a valuable thing; but now they had not, he thought very little of it) yet those of the ministry and nations who understand any thing of the subject, know better, and build all their hopes and schemes upon the supposition of such divisions in America as will forever prevent a combination of the States, either in prohibitions or retaliating duties. It is true that the national pride is much inflated at present by the course of exchange, which is much in their favor with all parts of the world, and disposes them to think little of American commerce. They say that the progress of the fine arts in this kingdom has given to their manufacturers a taste and skill, and to their productions an elegance, cheapness, and utility, so superior to any others, that the demand for their merchandises from all parts of Europe is greater than ever; that even Lord North's prohibitory bill has contributed to this advantage, by occasioning a demand among foreign merchants during the war, for goods to supply America. The knowledge and taste for British manufactures, they say, has been, by this means, spread all over Europe, and the demands for them multiplied, which has turned the balance so much in their favor, and caused such an extraor-

dinary influx both of cash and bills of exchange, into these kingdoms. Those who reflect more maturely upon this, however, see that this advantage is but temporary (if it is one); they say that the long stagnation of business by the war, had filled the country with manufactures; that, upon the peace, extraordinary efforts were made to dispose of them, by sending factors abroad, not only to America, but to all parts of Europe; that these factors have not only sold their goods at a low price, but have sent home cash and bills at a high one, so that their own factors have turned their course of exchange in their favor, in appearance, and for the present moment only, at their expense, for the loss, both upon the sale of goods and the purchase of remittances, is theirs. If these conjectures are right, the present appearance of prosperity will be succeeded by numerous failures and great distress. Be this as it may, the present appearance has produced a self-sufficiency which will prevent for some time any reasonable arrangement with us.

The popular pulse seems to beat high against America. The people are deceived by numberless falsehoods industriously circulated by the gazettes and in conversation, so that there is too much reason to believe that, if this nation had another hundred millions to spend, they would soon force the ministry into a war against us. The Court itself, whatever may be thought of it, appears at present to be the principal barrier against a war, and the best disposed towards us; and whether they are restrained by any thing beside their own poverty may be justly questioned. Their present system, as far as I can penetrate it, is to maintain a determined peace with all Europe, in order that they may war singly against America, if they should think it necessary.

Their attachment to their navigation act, as well as that of all other parties here, is grown so strong, and their determination to consider us as foreigners, and to undermine our navigation, and to draw away our seamen, is so fixed, in order to prevent us from privateering, in case of a war, that I despair of any equal treaty, and, therefore, of any treaty, until they shall be made to feel the necessity of it. It cannot, therefore, be too earnestly recommended to all the States to concur with the State of New York, in giving to congress full power to make treaties of commerce, and, in short, to govern all our external

commerce ; for, I really believe, it must come to that. Whether prohibitions or high duties will be most politic, is a great question. Duties may be laid, which will give a clear advantage to our navigation and seamen, and these would be laid by the States, upon the recommendations of congress, no doubt, as soon as the principle is admitted, that it is necessary that our foreign commerce should be under one direction.

You will easily infer, from all this, that I have no hopes of a treaty before next spring, nor then, without the most unanimous concurrence of all our States in vigorous measures, which shall put out of all doubt their power and their will to retaliate.

With great esteem, I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 24 July, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I have a letter from the Baron de Thulemeier of the 19th, and a copy of his letter to you of the same date. I hope now, in a few days, to take Mr. Short by the hand in Grosvenor Square, and to put my hand to the treaty. I think no time should be lost. We will join Mr. Dumas with Mr. Short in the exchange, if you please.

(*In Cipher.*)

The Briton's alien's duty is a very burdensome thing, and they may carry it hereafter as far upon tobacco, rice, indigo, and twenty other things, as they now do upon oil. To obviate this, I think of substituting the words "natural born citizens of the United States," and "natural born subjects of Great Britain," instead of "the most favored nation." You remember we first proposed to offer this to all nations, but, upon my objecting that the English would make their ships French or Swedish or Dutch, &c., to avail themselves of it, without agreeing to it on their part, we altered it to the footing of *gentis amicissimæ*. But, if the English will now agree to it, we shall secure ourselves against many odious duties, and no ill consequence can arise. It is true the French, Dutch, Swedes, and Prussians, will, of course, claim the advantage ; but, as they

must in return allow us the same advantage, so much the better. Let me know, if any objection occurs to you.

There is a bill before parliament to prevent smuggling tobacco, in which the restrictions are very rigorous, but cannot be effectual. Two thirds of the tobacco consumed in this kingdom, I am told, is smuggled. How can it be otherwise, when the impost is five times the original value of the commodity? If one pound in five escapes, nothing is lost. If two in five, a great profit is made. The duty is sixteen pence a pound, and tobacco sells for three pence; yet all applications for lowering the duty are resisted. Yours, most affectionately,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

Grosvenor Square, 27 July, 1785.

MY LORD, — Since the letter which I did myself the honor to write to your Lordship, relative to the construction of the armistice, I have received further information from America, which I beg leave to communicate to your Lordship.

The first judgment rendered on a mistaken interpretation of the armistice, appears to have been at New York, where all American vessels taken within the second month were condemned as lawful prize by the judge of admiralty. The fame of these decrees having reached Connecticut and Rhode Island, it is said that similar decrees were rendered by the inferior courts of admiralty there, against British vessels. There is, my Lord, a court of admiralty in each of the United States, but, by our constitution, an appeal lies from all of them to a court appointed by the United States in congress assembled, for receiving and determining finally appeals in all cases of capture. If the parties interested in the decrees in Connecticut and Rhode Island had appealed to the supreme court, those decrees would certainly have been reversed; because every cause which ever came before that court, upon the point in question, has been decided in favor of the British owner of the vessel; and should a declaration be now made of the true intention of the contracting parties, the British owners, against whom the decrees were rendered in Connecticut and Rhode Island, may still appeal, and have justice, if the time limited is not passed; if it

is, by an application to the legislatures of those States, there is no doubt to be made, that an appeal would be granted under the present circumstances, notwithstanding the lapse of time.

The decisions in the court of admiralty of Massachusetts and all other States have been conformable to the judgment of the supreme court of appeals; that is to say, conformable to the true intention of the armistice; and it is with pleasure that I add, that the judgments of his Majesty's court of admiralty, at Halifax, have been the same way.

The words of the armistice are supposed to be the same which have been constantly used in every treaty of peace for the last hundred years, and it is not known that there ever was, before, any doubt or difference of opinion concerning the construction of them. In order to establish confidence between the two countries, my Lord, it is necessary there should be a mutual confidence in each other's tribunals of justice, which can hardly exist while such various interpretations are given of so plain a point, by different courts in each nation.

In order to settle all disputes upon this subject upon one principle, I have the honor to propose to your Lordship, that a declaration should be made, in the form inclosed, or to the same effect in any other form, which to your Lordship may appear more proper. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

DECLARATION.

WHEREAS, by the first article of the preliminary treaty of peace between the Crown of Great Britain and the Crown of France, signed at Versailles, on the 20th of January, 1783, it was stipulated in these words, namely: —

"As soon as the preliminaries shall be signed and ratified, sincere friendship shall be reëstablished between his Most Christian Majesty and his Britannic Majesty, their kingdoms, states, and subjects, by sea and by land, in all parts of the world; orders shall be sent to the armies and squadrons, as well as to the subjects, of the two powers, to stop all hostilities, and to live in the most perfect union, forgetting the past, their sovereigns showing the example; and for the execution of this article, sea-passes shall be given on each side to the ships which shall be despatched to carry the news of it to the possessions of the said powers."

And by the twenty-second article of the same treaty it was stipulated in these words; —

"In order to prevent all causes of complaint and dispute which may arise on account of prizes that may be taken at sea, after the signing of these preliminary

articles, it is reciprocally agreed, that the vessels and effects which may be taken in the channel and in the north seas, after the space of twelve days, to be computed from the ratification of these preliminary articles, shall be restored on each side; *that the term shall be one month from the channel and the north seas, as far as the Canary Islands*, inclusively, whether in the ocean or in the Mediterranean; two months from the said Canary Islands, as far as the equinoctial line or equator; and, lastly, five months in all other parts of the world, without any exception or any other distinction more particular of time and place.

"And, whereas, on the said 20th day of January, 1783, it was agreed, and, by instruments signed by the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, in behalf of his Majesty, on one part, and by the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America, in behalf of the said United States, on the other, it was mutually declared, that the said United States of North America, their subjects and their possessions, and his Britannic Majesty, his subjects and possessions, should be comprised in the suspension of arms above mentioned, and that they should consequently enjoy the benefit of the cessation of hostilities at the same periods and in the same manner as the crowns aforesaid, and their subjects and possessions respectively; and whereas a doubt has arisen, and a question has been made, concerning the sense and intention of the high contracting parties, by the words "*d'un mois depuis la manche et les mers du Nord jusqu'aux Isles Canaries, inclusivement*," and by the words "*de deux mois depuis les dites Isles Canaries jusqu'à la ligne equinoxiale;*"

Now, in order to remove all such doubts and questions, and to the end that the same rule of justice may take place in all courts of justice, in both nations, it is hereby agreed and declared by ———— in the name and behalf of his Majesty, the King of Great Britain, on the one part, and by ———— ————, minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Court of Great Britain on the other, in the name and behalf of the said United States, that the line of latitude of the southernmost Canary Island was intended by the said contracting parties, and that the armistice aforesaid ought to be everywhere understood and construed in the same manner as if the words had been "from the channel and the north seas to the latitude of the Canary Islands inclusively," and "from the latitude of the said Canary Islands to the equinoctial line;" and that all judgments and decrees of courts of justice of either of the parties to this declaration, rendered upon any different construction of the armistice aforesaid, ought to be reversed.

Done at Westminster, this day of

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

Grosvenor Square, 29 July, 1785.

My Lord, — The course of commerce, since the peace, between Great Britain and the United States of America, has been such as to have produced many inconveniences to the persons concerned in it on both sides, which become every day

more and more sensible. The zeal of Americans to make remittances to British merchants, has been such as to raise the interest of money to double its usual standard, to increase the price of bills of exchange to eight or ten per centum above par, and to advance the price of the produce of the country to almost double the usual rate. Large sums of the circulating cash, and as much produce as could be purchased at almost any rate, have been remitted to England; but much of this produce lies in store here, because it will not fetch, by reason of the duties and restrictions on it, the price given for it in America. No political arrangements having been made, both the British and American merchants expected that the trade would have returned to its old channels, and nearly under the same regulations, found by long experience to be beneficial; but they have been disappointed. The former have made advances, and the latter contracted debts, both depending upon remittances in the usual articles, and upon the ancient terms, but both have found themselves mistaken, and it is much to be feared that the consequences will be numerous failures. Cash and bills have been chiefly remitted; neither rice, tobacco, pitch, tar, turpentine, ships, oil, nor many other articles, the great sources of remittances formerly, can now be sent as heretofore, because of restrictions and imposts, which are new in this commerce, and destructive of it; and the trade with the British West India Islands, formerly a vast source of remittance, is at present obstructed.

These evils, my lord, as far as they merely affect the United States, should not be offered to your Lordship's consideration. They are proper subjects for the deliberations of congress and the legislatures of the several States; but, as far as they affect the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland, and as far as they affect the general system of commerce, revenue, and policy of the British empire, your Lordship will, undoubtedly, give them their due weight. There is a literal impossibility, my lord, that the commerce between the two countries can continue long to the advantage of either upon the present footing. The evils already experienced will be much increased and more severely felt, if the causes of them are permitted much longer to operate. It is the desire of the citizens of the United States to cultivate the most friendly

intercourse with the King's subjects, and it will be with regret that they shall see the necessity of searching for other resources, as substitutes for British commerce, either in other countries or in manufactures at home. Whether it is not putting at hazard too material an interest, to risk an alienation from these kingdoms, of the American commerce, or any considerable part of it, for the sake of the advantages that can be obtained by the present restrictions on it, is a question which must be submitted to your Lordship's consideration.

In order to bring this subject, so momentous to both countries, under a candid discussion, I do myself the honor to inclose to your Lordship, and to propose to the consideration of his Majesty's ministers, a project of a fair and equitable treaty of commerce between his Majesty and the United States of America, prepared in conformity to the instructions of congress; and submit it entirely to your Lordship to decide, whether the negotiation shall be conducted with your Lordship, or with any other person, to be invested with powers equal to mine, to be appointed for the purpose.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 29 July, 1785.

Sir, — I have the honor to inclose a copy of a letter to the Marquis of Carmarthen of the 14th July, another of the 27th, with a project of a declaration concerning the construction of the armistice, and another of this date, with a project of a treaty of commerce. It is high time something should be done to turn the attention of administration to the relation between this country and the United States; and it seemed most advisable to lay the project of a treaty directly before the ministry, rather than first negotiate the appointment of any other minister to treat with me than the Marquis of Carmarthen himself. If I had first proposed the appointment of a minister, they would have procrastinated the business for six months, and perhaps twelve, before I could have communicated any thing to them; now, they can have no excuse. The offer is made, and hereafter they may repent of their error, if they do not accept it, or

something nearly like it, immediately. I am very sensible it will greatly embarrass the administration, because most of them, I believe, are sensible that some such treaty must be one day agreed to, and that it would be wise to agree to it now, but they are afraid of oppositions from many quarters. I must not, however, disguise my real sentiments. The present ministry are too much under the influence of Chalmers and Smith, and others of that stamp, and have been artfully drawn into so many manifestations of a determination to maintain their navigation laws, relatively to the United States, and of a jealousy of our naval power, small as it is, that I fear they have committed themselves too far to recede. Their Newfoundland act, as well as their proclamations, and the fourth of their Irish propositions, are in this style. I have no expectation that the proposed treaty will be soon agreed to, nor that I shall have any counter project, or indeed any answer, for a long time. It is very apparent that we shall never have a satisfactory arrangement with this country, until congress shall be made by the States supreme in matters of foreign commerce and treaties of commerce, and until congress shall have exerted that supremacy with a decent firmness.

I am, with great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 6 August, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I find the spirit of the times very different from that which you and I saw, when we were here together, in the months of November and December, 1783.

Then, the commerce of the United States had not fully returned to these kingdoms; then, the nation had not digested its system, nor determined to adhere so closely to its navigation acts, relatively to the United States; then, it was common, in conversation, to hear a respect and regard for America professed and even boasted of.

Now, the boast is, that our commerce has returned to its old channels, and that it can follow in no other; now, the utmost contempt of our commerce is freely expressed in pamphlets,

gazettes, coffee-houses, and in common street talk. I wish I could not add to this the discourses of cabinet counsellors and ministers of state, as well as members of both houses of parliament.

The national judgment and popular voice is so decided in favor of the navigation acts, that neither administration nor opposition dare avow a thought of relaxing them farther than has been already done. This decided cast has been given to the public opinion and the national councils by two facts, or rather presumptions. The first is, that in all events this country is sure of the American commerce. Even in case of war, they think that British manufactures will find their way to the United States through France, Holland, the Austrian low countries, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, the French and Dutch West Indies, and even through Canada and Nova Scotia. The second is, that the American States are not, and cannot be united. The landed interest will never join with the commercial nor the southern States with the northern, in any measures of retaliation or expressions of resentment. These things have been so often affirmed to this people by the refugees, and they have so often repeated them to one another, that they now fully believe them; and, I am firmly persuaded, they will try the experiment as long as they can maintain the credit of their stocks. It is our part, then, to try our strength. You know better than I do, whether the States will give congress the power, and whether congress, when they have the power, will judge it necessary or expedient to exert it, in its plenitude.

You were present in congress, sir, in 1774, when many members discussed in detail the commercial relations between the United States, then United Colonies, and Great Britain, Ireland, the British West Indies, and all other parts of the British empire, and showed to what a vast amount the wealth, power, and revenue of Great Britain would be affected by a total cessation of exports and imports. The British revenue is now in so critical a situation, that it might be much sooner and more essentially affected than it could be then. You remember, however, sir, that although the theory was demonstrated, the practice was found very difficult.

Britain has ventured to begin commercial hostilities. I call them hostilities, because their direct object is not so much the

increase of their own wealth, ships, or sailors, as the diminution of ours. A jealousy of our naval power is the true motive, the real passion which actuates them; they consider the United States as their rival, and the most dangerous rival they have in the world. I see clearly they are less afraid of an augmentation of French ships and sailors than American.

They think they foresee, that if the United States had the same fisheries, the same carrying trade, and the same market for ready built ships, which they had ten years ago, they would be in so respectable a posture, and so happy in their circumstances, that their own seamen, manufacturers, and merchants, too, would hurry over to them.

If congress should enter in earnest into this commercial war, it must necessarily be a long one, before it can fully obtain the victory; and it may excite passions on both sides which may break out into a military war. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the people and their councils will proceed with all the temperance and circumspection which such a state of things requires. I would not advise to this commercial struggle, if I could see a prospect of justice without it; but I do not; every appearance is on the contrary.

I have not, indeed, obtained any direct evidence of the intentions of the ministry, because I have received no answer to any of my letters to Lord Carmarthen; and, it seems to me, to press them at this juncture, with any great appearance of anxiety, would not be good policy. Let them hear a little more news from Ireland, France, and, perhaps, Spain, as well as America, which I think will operate in our favor. I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 7 August, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I am happy to find we agree so perfectly in the change which is made in the project. The die is cast. The proposal is made; let them ruminate upon it. I thought of proposing a tariff of duties, that we might pay no more in their ports than they should pay in ours; but their taxes are so essential to their credit, that it is impossible to part with any of them, and we should not choose to oblige ourselves to lay on

as heavy ones. We are at liberty, however, to do it when we please.

If the English will not abolish their alien's duty, relatively to us, we must establish an alien duty in all the United States. An alien duty against England alone will not answer the end. She will elude it by employing Dutch, French, Swedish, or any other ships, and by Frenchifying, Dutchifying, or Swedishing her own. If the English will persevere in excluding our ships from their West India Islands, Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, and in demanding an alien duty from us in their ports within the realm, and in refusing to American built ships the privileges of British built ships, we must take higher ground, — a vantage-ground. We must do more than lay on alien duties. We must take measures by which the increase of shipping and seamen will be not only encouraged, but rendered inevitable. We must adopt in all the States the regulations that were once made in England (5 Richard II. c. 3), and ordain that no American citizen, or denizen, or alien friend or enemy, shall ship any merchandise out of, or into the United States, but only in ships built in the United States, and navigated by an American captain and three fourths American seamen. I should be sorry to adopt a monopoly; but, driven by the necessity of it, I would not do things by halves. The French deserve it of us as much as the English, for they are as much enemies to our ships and mariners. Their navigation acts are not quite so severe as those of Spain, Portugal, and England (as they relate to their colonies, I mean) but they are not much less so; and they discover as strong a lust to annihilate our navigation as anybody.

Or, might we modify a little? Might we lay a duty of ten per cent. on all goods imported in any but ships built in the United States, without saying any thing about seamen? If we were to prohibit all foreign vessels from carrying on our coasting trade, that is, from trading from one State to another, and from one port to another in the same State, we should do something; for this commerce will be so considerable as to employ many ships and many seamen, of so much the more value to us, as they will always be ready at home for the defence of their country. But, if we should only prohibit importations, except in our own bottoms, or in the bottoms of the country or nation

of whose growth or production the merchandises are, we should do nothing effectual against Great Britain. She would desire nothing better than to send her productions to our ports in her own bottoms, and bring away ours in return. I hope the members of congress and the legislatures of the States will study the British acts of navigation, and make themselves masters of their letter and spirit, that they may judge how far they may be adopted by us; and, indeed, whether they are sufficient to do justice to our citizens in their commerce with Great Britain.

There is another inquiry which I hope our countrymen will enter upon, and that is, what articles of our produce will bear a duty on exportation. All such duties are paid by the consumer, and, therefore, are so much clear gain. Some of our commodities will not bear any such duties; on the contrary, they will require encouragement by bounties. But I suspect that several articles will bear a handsome impost. We shall find our commerce a complicated machine, and difficult to manage. And I fear we have not many men who have turned their thoughts to it. It must be comprehended by somebody in its system and in its detail, before it will be regulated as it should be.

I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 8 August, 1785.

Dear Sir, — It would be of little consequence to us, whether there was a union between Great Britain and Ireland, or not, or whether Mr. Pitt's twenty propositions are accepted or not, provided both these countries should be allowed to trade with the United States upon free and equal terms; but the design is too apparent, at least too suspicious, of drawing Ireland into the shackles of the navigation acts, in order that the three kingdoms may be made to act in concert, in maintaining that system of monopoly against us.

Several speakers in parliament, and many writers, have lately thrown out hints of an union with Ireland, and a certain printer and bookseller is now employed in reprinting Daniel de Foe's book upon the union with Scotland, to which he has engaged

Mr. de Lolme to write an introduction. This is all a ministerial operation, and is intended to be pushed, if Mr. Pitt's twenty propositions should either be rejected by the Irish parliament, or give too much discontent to the volunteers.

The twenty propositions, and the bill which is grounded on them, betray too clearly the intentions of the ministry.

"Whereas, it is highly and equally important to the interests, both of Great Britain and Ireland, and essential to the objects of the present settlement, that the laws for regulating trade and navigation, so far as relates to securing exclusive privileges to the ships and mariners of Great Britain and Ireland, and the British colonies and plantations, and so far as relates to the regulating and restraining the trade of the British Colonies and plantations, should be the same in Great Britain and Ireland, and that all such laws in both kingdoms should impose the same restraints, and confer the same benefits, on the subjects of both, which can only be effected by the laws to be passed in the parliament of both kingdoms (the parliament of Great Britain being alone competent to bind the people of Great Britain in any case whatsoever, and the parliament of Ireland being alone competent to bind the people of Ireland in any case whatsoever); therefore, be it declared, that it shall be held and adjudged to be a fundamental and essential condition of the present settlement, that the laws for regulating trade and navigation, so far as the said laws relate to the securing exclusive privileges to the *ships* and *mariners* of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Colonies and plantations, shall be the same in Great Britain and Ireland, and shall impose the same restraints, and confer the same benefits, on the subjects of both kingdoms."

"That all privileges, advantages, and immunities which are now granted, or shall, by any law to be passed by the parliament of Great Britain, be hereafter granted, to ships built in Great Britain, or to ships belonging to any of his Majesty's subjects residing in Great Britain, or to ships manned by British seamen, or to ships manned by certain proportions of British seamen, shall, to all intents and purposes whatever, be enjoyed in the same manner, and under the same regulations and restrictions respectively, by ships built in Ireland, or by ships belonging to any of his Majesty's subjects residing in

Ireland, or by ships manned by Irish seamen, or by ships manned by certain proportions of Irish seamen."

"That it shall be held and adjudged to be a fundamental and essential condition of the present settlement, that such regulations as are now, or hereafter shall be in force, by law passed or to be passed in the parliament of Great Britain, for securing exclusive privileges, advantages, and immunities as aforesaid, to the ships and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Colonies and plantations, shall be established in Ireland, for the same time and in the same manner as in Great Britain, by laws to be passed in the parliament of Ireland, within —— months, &c., provided, that the laws so to be passed in the parliament of Great Britain for the purposes aforesaid, shall impose the same restraints, and confer the same benefits, on the subjects of Great Britain and Ireland."

"That it shall be held and adjudged to be a fundamental and essential condition of the present settlement, that Irish sailcloth shall be deemed British sailcloth within the meaning of 19 G. II., or any other act or acts of parliament, respecting the furnishing of ships with British sailcloth, and that Irish sailcloth shall be entitled to equal preference and advantage as British for the use of the British navy."

"That it shall be held and adjudged to be a fundamental and essential condition of the present settlement, that all goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of any British, or of any foreign colony in America, or in the West Indies, or of any of the British or foreign settlements on the coast of Africa, and *all peltry, rum, train oil, and whale-fins*, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of the countries belonging to the United States of America, or being the produce of the fisheries carried on by the subjects of the United States of America, shall, on importation into Ireland, be made subject to the same duties and regulations as the like goods are, or from time to time shall be subject to, on importation into Great Britain; or, if prohibited from being imported into Great Britain, shall, in like manner, be prohibited from being imported into Ireland."

These extracts from the bill for finally regulating the intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, moved in the house of commons by the chancellor of the exchequer, are sufficient evidence of a design to draw Ireland into a combination against America.

This jealousy of our ships and mariners, sir, is not peculiar to the English; the French are equally possessed of it; and both are infected with it to such a degree, that I am confident, that each of these nations had rather contribute to the increase of the others' ships and mariners than those of the United States. It would not surprise me at all, if these two Courts, which can agree in nothing else, should combine together to exclude us from every branch of the carrying trade and every advantage of the whale fishery.

What shall we do to defend ourselves? Shall we confine the exportation of the produce of the United States to the ships and mariners of the United States? To increase the English navy, the statute of the 5 Ric. II. c. 3, enacted that "none of the King's liege people should ship any merchandise out of, or into the realm, but only in the ships of the King's liegeance, on pain of forfeiture." If the United States were able and willing to imitate this statute, and confine all our exports and imports to ships built in the United States, and navigated with American seamen, or three quarters American seamen, or one half, or even one third American seamen, what would be the consequence? We should not have at first enough either of ships or seamen to export the produce, and import what would be wanted from abroad; but we should see multitudes of people instantly employed in building ships, and multitudes of others immediately becoming sailors, and the time would not be long before we should have enough of both. The people of the United States have shown themselves capable of great exertions, and possessed of patience, courage, and perseverance, and willing to make large sacrifices to the general interest.

But are they capable of this exertion? Are they possessed of patience, courage, and perseverance enough to encounter the losses and embarrassments which would, at first, be occasioned by an exclusion of foreign ships? I wish I could know the number of foreign ships which have entered the ports of the United States since the peace, including English, French, Dutch, Italian, and Swedish vessels. The number must be very great. If all these ships and seamen were American, what materials would they furnish for a navy in case of need! How would this be received by foreign nations? Spain and Portugal would say nothing, because they have no ships in our trade;

France has few; Italy would have no right to object; nor Germany, Russia, Sweden, or Denmark. It would be laying an axe at the root of the British commerce, revenue, and naval power, however slightly they may think of us. Whether a heavy duty upon all foreign vessels, such as should operate as a decisive encouragement to American ships, would not answer the end as well, I am not able to judge.

The provisions of the act of navigation, 12 Car. II. c. 18, would not be sufficient for our purpose. If the United States should agree in a law, that no goods should be suffered to be imported into the United States in any other than American bottoms (navigated by an American master, and three fourths of the seamen American), or in the ships of that European nation of which the merchandise imported was the genuine growth or manufacture, this would not accomplish our wish, because British and Irish ships would desire no other than to import into our States the manufactures of the British empire, and to export our produce in the same bottoms. Some of the British statutes prohibit foreigners to carry on the coasting trade, that is, to go from one port to another in Great Britain; and this regulation will now be extended to Ireland, if the twenty propositions are accepted. A similar regulation might be adopted by the United States; and this would be a vast encouragement to our navigation, for the intercourse between one State and another, and between one port and another of the same State, will now be so frequent and considerable as to employ many ships and mariners; and in these the greatest strength of a country consists, because they are always at home ready to fight for the defence of their firesides.

If we should get over our aversion to monopolies and exclusions, and adopt the selfish, unsocial principles of the European nations, particularly of France and England, we should astonish the world with a navy in a very few years, not more than eight or ten, equal perhaps to the third maritime power in Europe. This would be amply sufficient for our defence. European statesmen know it better than we do, and dread it more than we desire it, because they think that from that period all the West India Islands, Canada, Nova Scotia, the Floridas and Mexico, too, would be made to join us. Why, then, will England pursue measures which will force us to try experiments

against our inclinations? There is no answer to be given to this question, but the same which must be given to another. Why did she force us into independence? The nation is infatuated, and every successive minister must be infatuated too, or lose his popularity and his place. Nor is France much less infatuated in her system of politics relative to America. The jealousy of our navigation is so strong and so common to both, that I should not be at all surprised, if France should agree that England should carry her point in Ireland, draw her into the navigation monopoly, and agree together to keep peace with one another, and force us, if they can, out of every nursery for seamen. I know that French noblemen are in England, and English gentlemen in France, preaching up to each other a terror of our naval power, and even the late *arrêt* against British manufactures may be but a blind to cover very different designs; both Courts are capable of such dissimulation, and they are now acting in concert in Germany, so much to the disgust of the two Imperial Courts, that I confess I do not admire this appearance of friendship any more than I can account for it.

It will require all the wisdom and all the firmness of congress and the States to plan and execute the measures necessary to counteract all these wiles.

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 10 August, 1785.

Dear Sir, — The *arrêt* of the King of France, in his council of the 10th of July, has a preamble which deserves to be well considered in America. The increasing liberality of sentiment among philosophers and men of letters, in various nations, has for some time given reason to hope for a *reformation*, a kind of *protestantism*, in the commercial system of the world; but I believe that this *arrêt* is the first act of any sovereign which has openly avowed commercial principles so generous and noble. "Nothing could appear to the King more desirable, or suitable to his own principles, than a general liberty which, freeing from all kinds of fetters the circulation of all productions and goods

of different countries, would make of all nations, as it were, but one, in point of trade; but, as long as that liberty cannot be universally admitted, and everywhere reciprocally, the interest of the kingdom requires of his Majesty's wisdom, that he should exclude from it, or suffer to be imported by the nation only, those foreign goods, the free importation of which would be hurtful to his kingdom and manufactories, and might make the balance of trade to be against him."

The United States of America have done more than all the economists in France towards propagating in the world this magnanimous sentiment. But they have more cause than the Court of France to complain, that liberty is not universally and reciprocally admitted. They have cause to complain against France herself, in some degree, but more against Great Britain; for France, in some degree, calculates all her policy towards us, upon a principle which England pursues more steadily; a principle not so properly of enriching and strengthening herself at our expense, as of impoverishing and weakening us even at her own expense. Simple selfishness, which is only the absence of benevolence, is much less unamiable than positive malevolence. As the French Court has condescended to adopt our principle in theory, I am very much afraid we shall be obliged to imitate their wisdom in practice, and exclude from the United States, or suffer to be imported by our nation only, and in their own ships, those foreign goods which would be hurtful to the United States and their manufactories, make the balance of trade to be against them, or annihilate or diminish their shipping or mariners.

We have hitherto been the bubbles of our own philosophical and equitable liberality; and, instead of meeting correspondent sentiments, both France and England have shown a constant disposition to take a selfish and partial advantage of us because of them, nay, to turn them to the diminution or destruction of our own means of trade and strength. I hope we shall be the dupes no longer than we must. I would venture upon monopolies and exclusions, if they were found to be the only arms of defence against monopolies and exclusions, without fear of offending Dean Tucker or the ghost of Doctor Quesnay.

I observe further, with pleasure, in the preamble, that the King "is particularly occupied with the means of encouraging

the industry of his subjects, and of propagating the extent of their trade, and reviving their manufactories." Great things may be done in this way, for the benefit of America as well as of France, if the measures are calculated upon the honest old principle of "live and let live." But, if another maxim is adopted, "I will live upon your means of living," or another still worse, "I will half starve that you may quite starve," instead of rejoicing at it, we must look out for means of preserving ourselves. These means can never be secured entirely, until congress shall be made supreme in foreign commerce, and shall have digested a plan for all the States. But, if any of the States continue to refuse their assent, I hope that individual States will take it separately upon themselves, and confine their exports and imports wholly to ships and mariners of the United States, or even to their own ships and mariners, or, which is best of all, to the ships and mariners of those States which will adopt the same regulations. I should be extremely sorry, however, that there ever should be a necessity of making any distinction between the ships and mariners of different States. It would be infinitely better to have all American ships and seamen entitled to equal privileges in all the thirteen States; but their privileges should be made much greater than those of foreign ships and seamen.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 18 August, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favor of the 6th instant, with the notes and project inclosed. How can we send another person? We have not, in our full power, authority to substitute. Will not the Emperor and the regencies feel their dignity offended, if a person appears without a commission from congress? Do you mean that he should only agree upon the terms, and transmit them to us to be signed? If you think this method will do, I have no objection to either of the persons you mention, nor to Mr. Short. Dr. Bancroft is the greatest master of the French language. If we conclude to send either, he should have an attested copy, at least, of all our commissions

for Africa, and a letter and instructions from us. If there is any truth in any of the reports of captures by the Algerines, Lamb's vessel may be taken by them. Whoever is sent by us should be instructed to correspond constantly with us, and to send by whatever conveyance he may find, whether through Spain, France, England, Holland, or otherwise, copies of his letters to us to congress. He should be instructed further, to make diligent inquiry concerning the productions of those countries which would answer in America, and those of the United States which might find a market in Barbary, and to transmit all such information to congress as well as to us.

I have read over the project with care. The seventeenth article appears to be carried further than our countrymen will be willing at present to go. I presume the three last words of the third line of this seventeenth article must be left out; and in the fourth line, the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth words, and in the sixth line, the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth words.

You have seen by this time our Massachusetts navigation act; and the reasonings and dispositions of all the States tend the same way at present; so that we must conform our proceedings, as I suppose, to their views. Yours, &c. &c.

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 23 August, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Last night I received your favor of the 17th.[1] If both governments are possessed of the contents of my letter of the 7th, by opening it in the post-office, much good may those contents do them. They both know they have deserved them. I hope they will convince them of their error, and induce them to adopt more liberal principles towards us. I am for answering their utmost generosity with equal, and, indeed, with greater generosity; but I would not advise my country to be the bubble of her own nobleness of sentiment.

The spirited conduct of Ireland, I think, will assist me here.

[1] I received yesterday your favor of the 7th. It had evidently been opened. We must therefore consider both governments as possessed of its contents.
Extract from Mr. Jefferson's note of the 7th, written in cipher.

The news of the reception in the Irish parliament of the twenty resolutions, together with the efforts in America towards a navigation act, have raised my hopes a good deal; but our States must mature their plan, and persevere in it, in order to effect the work in time; and, with a steady pursuit of our purpose, I begin to think we shall prevail.

If Mr. Barclay will undertake the voyage, I am for looking no farther. We cannot find a steadier or more prudent man. He should look out for some clerk or companion who can write French, and who understands Italian.

When Dr. Price returns from his August excursion to some watering place, I will get him to make the insurance upon Houdon's life on the best terms he can. Adieu.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 25 August, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Yesterday, I had a long conference with Mr. Pitt for the first time. He never had proposed any interview with me, and I had delayed to request him to appoint any time, after the first ceremonial visit, for two reasons, — because, while parliament was sitting, his time and mind were so engaged, that it was impossible he should attend in earnest to the affairs of the United States; and because I expected that a little time would bring, both from America and Ireland, intelligence which would somewhat lessen that confidence with which the ministry and the nation were elated. Such intelligence has now arrived. The twenty resolutions have been in effect given up, that they might not be rejected by the Irish parliament; and the Massachusetts act of navigation has appeared, together with advices from Virginia, Philadelphia, New York, and various other parts of the United States, which have excited a serious apprehension that all have the same principles and views.

I shall not attempt to give you the conversation in detail, yet it is necessary to give some particulars, from which you may judge how much or how little may result from the whole. He asked me what were the principal points to be discussed

between us? I answered, that I presumed the Marquis of Carmarthen had laid before the King's servants some papers which I had done myself the honor to write to him. He said he had. I replied, that those letters related to the evacuation of the forts upon the frontier; to the construction of the armistice; and to a treaty of commerce; and that, besides these, there were the negroes carried off contrary to the treaty, and some other points which I had particularly explained to Lord Carmarthen. He said that the carrying off the negroes was so clearly against the treaty, that they must take measures to satisfy that demand, if we could prove how many were carried off. I told him that Sir Guy Carleton could easily ascertain the number, and that Colonel Smith, who negotiated with Sir Guy, could do the same, and that I had the evidence of their proceedings ready to produce, whenever it was wanted. He entered, then, into the subject of the armistice, and we were longer on this point than we needed to have been. I observed to him that Mr. Blower's construction was demonstrably absurd, because it would place the whole coast of America in the period of five months; the coast of the United States certainly was not between the Canary Islands and the equator, and, therefore, could not be included in the period of two months; it is neither in the channel nor north seas, and, therefore, cannot be within the period of twelve days; consequently, if it is not in the period of one month, it must be in that of five months, an idea that never could have been entertained a moment by either of the contracting parties. Mr. Pitt said he thought that was clear, and that this point might be easily settled; but, as to the posts, says he, that is a point connected with some others, that I think must be settled at the same time. I asked him, what these points were. He said, the debts. Several of the States had interfered, against the treaty, and, by acts of their legislatures, had interposed impediments to the recovery of debts, against which there were great complaints in this country. I replied to this, that I had explained this at great length to the Marquis of Carmarthen; but that I might now add, that congress had, very early after the peace, proposed an explanation of the article, as far as it respected the interest of debts contracted before the war. They had instructed their ministers at Paris to propose such an explanation to this Court; that we

had proposed it through Mr. Hartley first, and the Duke of Dorset afterwards, and that I had renewed the proposition to my Lord Carmarthen, upon my first conference with him; but that we had never received an answer. I thought it was best there should be an explanation; for I was persuaded that an American jury would never give any interest for the time which ran during the war. Mr. Pitt said, that would surprise the people here; for that wars never interrupted the interest nor principal of debts, and that he did not see a difference between this war and any other, and the lawyers here made none. I begged his pardon here, and said, that the American lawyers made a wide difference; they contended that the late war was a total dissolution of all laws and government, and, consequently, of all contracts made under those laws; and that it was a maxim of law, that a personal right or obligation, once dissolved or suspended, was lost forever; that the intervention of the treaty and the new laws was necessary for the revival of those ancient rights and obligations; that these rights were in a state of non-existence during the war, and no interest during that period could grow out of them. These being the opinions in America, it was not probable that any jury would be found, from Georgia to New Hampshire, who would give, by their verdict, interest to a creditor; and, therefore, it was most fair and equitable, that an explanation should be made, that the same rule of law might be observed on both sides. This observation appeared to strike him. He said, if there was any danger of this, it would be best that an explanation should be made, but that the balance of debts was much in favor of this country, which I did not deny; but, he said, the government would not dare to make it, without previously feeling out the dispositions of the persons chiefly interested, and knowing how it would be taken by them. We had a much longer conversation concerning these debts, and the difficulty of paying them, arising from the restrictions on our trade, in which I repeated to him what I had before said to Lord Carmarthen and to the deputies of the Scotch creditors; but, as I have transmitted that to you before, it is unnecessary to repeat it here.

He then began upon the treaty of commerce, and asked what were the lowest terms which would be satisfactory to America. I answered, that I might not think myself competent to deter-

mine that question. Articles might be proposed to me, that I should not think myself qualified to decide upon without writing to congress; but I would venture so far as to say, that I thought the project I had communicated to Lord Carmarthen would give satisfaction to America, and secure the friendship of the United States, and the essence of their trade to this country. But that, in proportion as a plan less liberal was adopted, that friendship would be precarious, and that trade would be scattered. I added, that the most judicious men in America had been long balancing in their minds the advantages and the disadvantages of a commerce perfectly free on one side, and of a navigation act on the other; that the present time was a critical one; the late intelligence from all parts of America concurred with the navigation act of Massachusetts, in proving which way the balance began to incline, and, in my opinion, it would be decided by the conduct of this country; it was now in his, Mr. Pitt's power, to decide it; but the more Americans reflected upon the great advantages which they might derive from a navigation act, the more they would become attached to that system. I had heard there were five hundred foreign ships employed the last year in the commerce of the United States. How easy would it be to have all these ships the property of American citizens, and the navigators of them, American seamen! There was once a statute in England (that of 5 Ric. II. c. 3), "That none of the King's liege people should ship any merchandise out of, or into the realm, but only in ships of the King's liegeance, on pain of forfeiture." I asked him what physical or political impediment there was to prevent the United States from adopting that very act in all its rigor. The right of every nation to govern its own commerce, its own exports and imports, would not be denied nor questioned by any nation. To this he agreed. Our ability to build the ships, and our abundance of materials, could not be doubted. This he assented to. Nobody would pretend that our produce would not find a market in Europe in our own ships, or that Europeans would not sell us their manufactures to carry home in them. Even England, if she should make ever so strict laws to prevent exports and imports in our bottoms, would still be glad to receive and consume considerable quantities of our produce, though she imported them through France or Holland; and to

send us as many of her manufactures as we could pay for, through the same channels.

He more than smiled assent to this, for he added that there were American articles of much importance to them; but, he said, that Englishmen were much attached to their navigation. And Americans, too, said I, to theirs. But, said he, the United States having now become a foreign nation, our navigation act would not answer its end, if we should dispense with it towards you. Here I begged his pardon again; for I thought their navigation act would completely defeat its own end, as far as it respected us; for the end of the navigation act, as expressed in its own preamble, was to confine the commerce of the Colonies to the mother country; but, now we were become independent States, if carried into execution against us, instead of confining our trade to Great Britain, it would drive it to other countries. This he did not deny; but, said he, you allow we have a right. Certainly I do; and you, sir, will allow we have a right, too. Yes, I do; but you cannot blame Englishmen for being attached to their ships and seamen which are so essential to them. Indeed, I do not, sir; nor can you blame Americans for being attached to theirs, which are so much fewer and so much more essential to them. No, I do not blame them.

As this was a very sprightly dialogue, and in very good humor, I thought I might push it a little. I will be very frank with you, sir, said I, and I think it will be best for us to go to the bottom of these subjects. The Americans think that their exclusion from your West India Islands, the refusal of their ships and oil and other things, and their exclusion from your Colonies on the continent and Newfoundland, discover a jealousy of their little naval power, and a fixed system of policy to prevent the growth of it; and this is an idea that they cannot bear. No, said he, if we endeavored to lessen your shipping and seamen, without benefiting or increasing our own, it would be hard and unreasonable, and would be a just ground of uneasiness; but when we only aim at making the most of our own means and nurseries, you cannot justly complain. I am happy, sir, to hear you avow this principle, and agree with you perfectly in it; let us apply it. Both parties having the right and the power to confine their exports and imports to their own ships and seamen, if both exercise the right and exert the power

in its full extent, what is the effect? The commerce must cease between them. Is this eligible for either? To be sure, said he, we should well consider the advantages and the disadvantages in such a case. If it is not found to be eligible for either, said I, after having well considered, what remains, but that we should agree upon a liberal plan, and allow equal freedom to each other's ships and seamen? especially if it should be found that this alone can preserve friendship and good humor. For I fully believe that this plan alone can ever put this nation in good humor with America, or America with this country. He then mentioned ships and oil. He said we could not think hard of them for encouraging their own shipwrights, their manufactures of ships, and their own whale fishery. I answered, by no means; but it appeared unaccountable to the people of America, that this country should sacrifice the general interest of the nation to the private interest of a few individuals interested in the manufacture of ships and in the whale fishery, so far as to refuse these remittances from America, in payment of debts, and for manufactures which would employ so many more people, augment the revenue so considerably, as well as the national wealth, which would, even in other ways, so much augment the shipping and seamen of the nation. It was looked upon in America as reconciling themselves to a diminution of their own shipping and seamen, in a great degree, for the sake of diminishing ours in a small one, besides keeping many of their manufacturers out of employ, who would otherwise have enough to do; and besides greatly diminishing the revenue, and, consequently, contrary to the maxim which he had just acknowledged, that one nation should not hurt itself for the sake of hurting another, nor take measures to deprive another of any advantage, without benefiting itself.

He then asked me, if we could grant to England, by a treaty, any advantages which would not immediately become the right of France. I answered, we could not. If the advantage was stipulated to England, without a compensation, France would be entitled to it without a compensation; but, if it was stipulated for an equivalent or reciprocal privilege, France must allow us the same equivalent or reciprocal privilege. But, I added, France would not be a very successful rival to Great Britain in the American commerce, upon so free a footing as that of the

mutual liberty of natural-born subjects and citizens; upon the footing of the most favored nation, France would stand a good chance in many things. In case of mutual navigation acts between Britain and America, France would have more of our commerce than Britain. In short, Britain would lose and France gain, not only in our commerce, but our affections, in proportion as Britain departed from the most liberal system. Upon this he asked me a question which I did not expect. "What do you really think, sir, that Britain ought to do?" That question, sir, may be beyond my capacity to answer, and my answer may be suspected; but, if it is, I will answer it to the best of my judgment, and with perfect sincerity. I think this country ought to prescribe to herself no other rule, but to take from America every thing she can send as a remittance; nay, to take off every duty, and give every bounty that should be necessary to enable her to send any thing as a remittance. In this case, America would prescribe to herself no other rule than to take of British productions as much as she could pay for. He might think this no proof of our republican frugality, but such was the disposition of our people, and, how much soever I might lament it, I would not disguise it. He then led me into a long, rambling conversation about our whale fishery and the English, and the French whale fishery that M. de Calonne is essaying to introduce, too little interesting to be repeated. Yet I should mention that he asked me a sudden question, whether we had taken any measures to find a market for our oil anywhere but in France. This question must have been suggested to him, I think, either by information that our oil is wanted in some countries upon the continent, or by a suspicion that we have been trying to introduce our oil into Ireland. I answered, that I believed we had, and I have been told, that some of our oil had found a good market at Bremen; but there could not be a doubt that spermaceti oil might find a market in most of the great cities in Europe which were illuminated in the night, as it is so much better and cheaper than the vegetable oil that is commonly used. The fat of the spermaceti whale gives the clearest and most beautiful flame of any substance that is known in nature, and we are all surprised that you prefer darkness, and consequent robberies, burglaries, and murders in your streets, to the receiving, as a remittance, our spermaceti

oil. The lamps around Grosvenor Square, I know, and in Downing Street, too, I suppose, are dim by midnight, and extinguished by two o'clock; whereas our oil would burn bright till nine o'clock in the morning, and chase away, before the watchmen, all the villains, and save you the trouble and danger of introducing a new police into the city.

He said, he owned he was for taking advantage of the present short time of leisure, to mature some plan about these things. I told him, I rejoiced to find that was his opinion, and that I would be at all times ready to attend him, or any other minister, whenever any explanation should be wanted from me; that I was anxious for an answer concerning the posts, as I was in duty bound to insist on their evacuation. He said he thought that connected with several other points, and should be for settling all these together, so that he must reserve himself at entire liberty concerning them.

I am sorry that, in representing all these conversations, I am obliged to make myself the principal speaker; but I cannot get them to talk. The reason is, they dare not. All must be determined in the cabinet, and no single minister chooses to commit himself, by giving any opinion which may be ever quoted to his disadvantage by any party.

This is not only the state of mind of every minister, but of every ministry. They have an unconquerable reluctance to deciding upon any thing, or giving any answer; and although Mr. Pitt and Lord Carmarthen have hazarded opinions upon some points to me, I do not believe I shall get any answer officially from the cabinet or the minister of foreign affairs. I wish for an answer, be it ever so rough or unwise. Mr. Pitt, I confess, was much more open than I expected. He was explicit in my favor, relative to the negroes and the armistice, and for digesting the whole in the present leisure, and giving me an answer. I should rejoice in a cabinet answer to all my letters, and especially in a counter-project of a treaty; but I will be so free as to say I do not expect any answer at all before next spring, nor then, unless intelligence should arrive of all the States adopting the navigation act, or authorizing congress to do it; and, even in that case, I am inclined to think they will try the experiment, and let our navigation acts operate, to satisfy themselves which people will first roar out with pain. They deceive themselves

yet in many points, which I may enumerate in a future letter.

From what Mr. Pitt said, I am convinced we shall have no answer concerning the posts.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Charles Storer, your old acquaintance, who has served me much as a private secretary, and that without fees.

SECRETARY JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Office for Foreign Affairs, 26 August, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — It gives me pleasure to inform you that your letters of 2d, 6th, and 17th June last have been received, and were this day laid before congress, who, I am persuaded, will read them with as much satisfaction as I have done. You have been in a situation that required much circumspection. I think you have acquitted yourself in a manner that does you honor.

The vessel that is to carry this sails in the morning, so that, at present, I can only add my best wishes, and assure you that

I am, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 30 August, 1785.

SIR, — The more I consider what I see and hear every day, the more I am inclined to think we shall be obliged to imitate the Utopians, who, as Sir Thomas More informs, "as to their exportations, thought it better to manage that themselves, than to let foreigners come and deal in it; for, by this means, as they understand the state of the neighboring countries better, so they keep up the art of navigation, which cannot be maintained but by much practice in it."

I would not be understood, however, to wish that the United

States should at present proceed farther than to exclude British ships from "coming and dealing" in our exportations. Other nations may be permitted, for any thing that I know, without inconvenience; at least the experiment may be tried. Other foreign nations will probably have few ships employed in this way; England, Scotland, and Ireland would have many; but, if it should be found that British ships are Frenchified, Dutchified, or otherwise metamorphosed, in order to manage any part of our exportations, I hope the United States will not hesitate to make the prohibition universal to the ships of all nations, and confine their exports to their own. There is no other way that I know of, in which we can compensate ourselves for that vigorous exclusion of American built ships from the British dominions, upon which all parties here, I fear, are determined. The popular cry has been universal, as I am informed, "What! Shall the United States be our ship carpenters? Shall we depend upon a foreign nation for our navigation? In case of war with them, shall we be without ships, or obliged to our enemies for them?"

With regard to duties, will our countrymen be long contented to pay four or five hundred per cent. upon their tobacco, and fifty per cent. upon other articles of their produce, in the ports of Great Britain, while British subjects pay but ten per cent. upon the importation of any of their commodities in our ports? I do not believe they will. They will rather lay duties upon British luxuries, to repay their own citizens the duties they pay in British ports. It is indeed impossible to foresee where this conflict of prohibition and duties will end. It is impossible to conjecture what the English will attempt. I am not easy about the negotiations now on foot with France and Spain. I have not yet sufficiently explained myself to you upon this subject.

By the eighteenth article of the definitive treaty of peace between France and England, signed at Versailles the 3d of September, 1783, it is stipulated that "immediately after the exchange of the ratifications, the two high contracting parties shall name commissaries to treat concerning new arrangements of commerce between the two nations, on the basis of reciprocity and mutual convenience, which arrangements shall be settled and concluded within the space of two years, to be computed from the first of January in the year 1784."

In the ninth article of the definitive treaty between Great Britain and Spain, there is a stipulation in the same words; and the Duke of Manchester made a declaration to each of those powers at the same time "that the new state in which commerce may, perhaps, be found in all parts of the world, will demand revisions and explanations of the subsisting treaties."

In compliance with these stipulations and declarations, Mr. Crawford was long ago sent to Paris to treat with the Court of Versailles, and Mr. Woodward is lately appointed here to treat with Mr. Del Campo on the part of Spain. Mr. Crawford transmitted to his Court, a year ago, a plan which he received from the French minister; but I know, from the Duke of Dorset, who told me himself, that Mr. Crawford had no answer from England in six months, and, indeed, I conjecture that he had none till since the edict of the French King, prohibiting British manufactures. If these arrangements are not made before the first of January, the two years will be expired, and nothing more will be said of them until another war and peace. But, I confess, I shall be anxious until new year's day. The conduct of this Court, in these discussions with France and Spain, is very interesting to us, as it will throw much light upon their intentions towards us. There are great appearances of a fixed intention to keep the peace with France and Spain for a long period. The late advice of the ministers of the King of Great Britain to the Elector of Hanover, to join the league of the King of Prussia, against the views of the Emperor and Empress, can be accounted for on no supposition, but that of a determination, in all events, to preserve their peace with France and Spain. Whence this love of France and of peace? Neither is a natural passion in an English breast. Let my country answer, "it is not love of me." On the contrary, although I wish not to alarm my fellow-citizens, it appears to me that the plan of this country towards us is nearly settled; it is not fully, and will not be, until the next budget is opened. The next budget will decide the fate of this country, and especially her system towards the United States.

If Mr. Pitt should then, in 1786, be able to justify his hypothesis at the opening of the budget in 1785, and shall be able to show that the taxes have increased in the proportion, with the hope of which he flattered himself and the nation, this govern-

ment will then preserve the peace with France and Spain, at almost any rate, persevere in their system of commerce respecting the United States of America, in spite of all your arguments and remonstrances, prohibitions and retaliations, and ultimately attack you with a new war. In my private opinion, in the mean time it is their fixed design to keep possession of the posts on the frontier. Sir John Johnson is certainly going out; and it is given out that fifteen hundred men are going to Quebec, and materials, engineers, and workmen for large fortifications in Nova Scotia.

In short, sir, America has no party at present in her favor. All parties, on the contrary, have committed themselves against us, except Shelburne and Buckingham, and the last of these is against a treaty of commerce with us; so is even Mr. Temple, who is gone out to New York, appointed, as I suppose, in compliment to his namesake, the Marquis of Buckingham. I had almost said the friends of America are reduced to Dr. Price and Dr. Jebb. Patience, under all the unequal burthens they impose upon our commerce, will do us no good; it will contribute in no degree to preserve the peace with this country. On the contrary, nothing but retaliation, reciprocal prohibitions and imposts, and putting ourselves in a posture of defence, will have any effect.

This country can furnish their West India Islands and continental colonies and Newfoundland, so that we cannot suddenly make them feel. We cannot prevent the introduction of their manufactures among us so effectually as to make them feel very soon. They may lessen the duties on Spanish tobacco, so as to make the Spaniards our rivals, and hurt our tobacco States. There are many ways in which they may hurt us, of which we should be apprized beforehand. Ships and oil, all men say, will never be received of us.

I hope the States will be cool, and do nothing precipitately; but, I hope, they will be firm and wise. Confining our exports to our own ships, and laying on heavy duties upon all foreign luxuries, and encouraging our own manufactures, appear to me to be our only resource, although I am very sensible of the many difficulties in the way, and of the danger of their bringing on, in the course of a few years, another war. Nothing but our strength and their weakness will, in my opinion, protect us

from such a calamity. They will never again pour large armies into the United States; but they think they can distress us more, by cutting off all our trade by their shipping, and they mean that we shall have no ships nor sailors to annoy their trade.

I would, however, advise the States to suspend their judgments as much as they can, without suspending their navigation acts, until another spring and summer shall have developed the British system of politics in Germany, their plans with France and Spain, and, above all, the state of their debts and taxes and their credit.

I do not believe the ministers have yet digested their own system. It will depend still, in some measure, upon contingencies. There is a taciturnity among them that is very uncommon. They have spies in every corner, who can carry them every whisper as punctually as the police of Paris. I wish I had better means of obtaining intelligence from them, and watching their words and actions; but information of this kind is costly beyond my revenues. With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 16 September, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your letter of the 4th instant, by Colonel Franks, with a project of a letter to the Emperor of Morocco, and several other papers. I have had this letter fairly copied, with very few and very inconsiderable alterations, and have signed it. I have left room enough at the beginning for you to insert, or leave Mr. Barclay to insert, the Emperor's titles and address, which may be done with the most certainty in Morocco. By the treaty we have with Holland, the states-general have agreed, upon requisition, to second our negotiations in the most favorable manner, by means of their consuls. I would have prepared a memorial and requisition to that purpose, and have sent it to the Hague; but such a memorial would publish to all the world Mr. Barclay's mission. I shall wait for your advice, and, if you think proper, I will still send a memorial. But, I am inclined to think, we had better wait until we receive

from Mr. Barclay, in Morocco, some account of his prospects. The best argument Mr. Barclay can use, to obtain treaties on moderate terms, is, that we have absolutely, as yet, no ships in the Mediterranean Sea, and shall have none until treaties are made; that our seamen will not go there until treaties are made; that, therefore, the Algerines will have no chance of taking any American vessels anywhere but in the Atlantic, and there they can expect to take but very few, at a vast expense of corsairs, and exposed to our privateers and frigates. Treaties of peace are very unpopular with the people of Algiers; they say it is taking from them all the opportunities of making profits by prizes, for the sake of enriching the Dey by presents. The probability, then, that our trade would be more beneficial to the people than the few prizes they would have a chance to make, by going at a vast expense out of the Mediterranean, and spreading themselves over the ocean, in quest of our ships, exposed to our frigates and the men-of-war of Portugal, &c., would be the best reason for the Dey to use with the people. The common argument is, the bombardments and depredations with which their enemies threaten them by their fleets and squadrons, which commonly accompany the embassy. Mr. Barclay will be very naked in this respect.

Your most humble servant,

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 18 September, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Inclosed, you have, in confidence, some compliments. Give me in confidence your opinion of them. Is there any thing said by me, which I ought not to have said? Is there any expression exceptionable? Have I compromised myself or the public in any thing, more than ought to be?

The custom of making a speech is so settled, that not only the secretary of state and the master of ceremonies, but some of the foreign ministers took the pains to inform me it was indispensable. Otherwise, being sensible of the difficulty of being complaisant enough, without being too much, I intended

to have delivered my credentials without saying more than that they were credentials to his Majesty from the United States.

Your friend,

John Adams.

THE COMMISSIONERS TO JOHN JAY.

London, 2 October, 1785.

Sir, — We have the honor to transmit to congress, by Mr. Fitzhugh, the treaty between the United States and the King of Prussia, signed separately by your ministers at the several places of their residence, and by the Baron de Thulemeier at the Hague, in English and French, and exchanged at the Hague in presence of Messrs. Short and Dumas. As this treaty may be of considerable importance to the United States, and will certainly promote their reputation, it is to be wished that the ratifications may be exchanged, and the publication made, as soon as possible. The admission of our privateers into the Prussian ports, by a treaty signed at the moment of the negotiation of the league in which Brandenburg and Hanover are parties, is a little remarkable. It certainly merits the consideration of congress and the States.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

Paris, 11 October, 1785.

Thomas Jefferson.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 2 October, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Colonel Franks arrived yesterday afternoon with your favor of the 24th September. I have signed all the papers as you sent them, not perceiving any alterations necessary. I am afraid that our agent to Algiers, going without any military power, will not succeed; as the danger of having their town bombarded, or their vessels taken, is the principal argument which the Dey has to use with the people to reconcile them to peace. However, we must try the experiment. I have

received a letter from Mr. Stephen Sayre, dated New York, 25th August, inclosing another of 23d August, signed by Messrs. Gerry, King, Hardy, Monroe, and Grayson, recommending strongly Mr. Sayre to you and to me, to be employed as agent to Morocco, Algiers, and the other powers, and inclosing another letter to you, probably to the same effect. This letter I now inclose you. It is but a day or two those letters have been received by me. Franks is gone to see if Mr. Randall can be prevailed on to go. If he cannot, will you join Sayre with Lamb? If you will, insert his name in the papers. Mr. Lamb will meet Mr. Sayre at Madrid, where I suppose he now is. But, if he is not, Lamb must not wait for him a moment. I should very willingly undertake the trouble of having bills drawn on me, both by Mr. Barclay and Mr. Lamb, if the good of the service could be promoted by it. But you are sensible there must be a loss in transferring money from Amsterdam to London; yet the advantage may balance it.

You are diffident of interpositions; but it is possible we may carry this too far. I think Mr. Barclay and Mr. Lamb would do well to visit all the foreign consuls. Every one of them will, I am persuaded, show them civilities, and do nothing at all to obstruct their negotiations. They will not dare to do it without orders, and no cabinet in Europe, I verily believe, will venture to give such orders. It will not be from governments that we shall receive opposition. Agents of insurance offices in London, or of merchants trading in fish, &c., in the Mediterranean, may stimulate the corsairs, by exaggerated representations of our wealth, and the riches of our prizes; but that is all. As nothing can be more hostile to the United States than any endeavors to embarrass, obstruct, or counteract them in their endeavors to form treaties of peace with the Barbary powers, I wish you would impress it upon Mr. B. and Mr. L. to be attentive to this, and obtain proofs. And, if the consul or agent of any foreign power should be found and proved to do any thing against us, that they transmit to us the earliest account of it with the evidence. Congress would, no doubt, order a formal complaint to be made against him to his Court; and in this way he would be held up publicly to the execrations of all mankind, and probably be punished by his master.

5 October.

We have prevailed on Paul Randall, Esquire, to go with Mr. Lamb, so that Sayre, I suppose, must be out of the question, especially as we know not that he is arrived in Europe. I should think that much time might be saved by Mr. Lamb's going directly to Marseilles, and from thence over to Algiers; but, if you think there will be a greater advantage in the seeing the Algerine envoy at Madrid, or the Count d'Expilly, if he negotiated the late treaty for Spain, I shall submit entirely to your judgment.

As our commissions authorize us, I suppose, it will be construed that they require us to constitute the agents by writing, under our hands and seals. I have accordingly made out four commissions, which, if you approve, you will sign and seal, as I have done.

I have written letters to Mr. Barclay and Mr. Lamb, authorizing them to draw on me. These letters you will please to sign, as the signature of both of us will be necessary. You will be so good, also, as to write to Messrs. Willink, and Nicholas and Jacob Van Staphorst, of Amsterdam, giving your approbation and consent to their paying the bills to be drawn upon me by Mr. Barclay and Mr. Lamb. Otherwise, they may think my authority alone imperfect.

I am, sir, yours, &c.

John Adams.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 11 October, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Colonel Franks and Mr. Randolph arrived last night. This enables me to send copies of all the Barbary papers to congress by the Mr. Fitzhughs, together with the Prussian treaty. They wait till to-morrow for this purpose.

Considering the treaty with Portugal, as among the most important to the United States, I some time ago took occasion at Versailles to ask the Portuguese ambassador if he had yet received an answer from his Court on the subject of our treaty. He said not; but that he would write again. His *secrétaire*

d'ambassade called on me two days ago, and translated into French, as follows, a paragraph of a letter from his minister to the ambassador.

"Relativement à ce que votre excellence nous a fait part de ce qu'elle avoit parlé avec le ministre de l'Amérique, cette puissance doit être déjà persuadée par des faits de la manière dont ses vaisseaux ont été accueillis ici; et par conséquence sa Majesté auroit beaucoup de satisfaction à entretenir une parfaite harmonie et bonne correspondance avec les mêmes États Unis. Mais il seroit à propos de commencer par la nomination réciproque des deux parties des personnes qui, au moins avec le caractère d'agens, informeroient réciproquement leurs constituants de ce qui pourroit conduire à la connoissance des intérêts des deux nations sans préjudice de l'un ou de l'autre. C'est le premier pas qu'il paroit convenable de donner pour conduire à la fin proposée."

By this, I suppose, they will prefer proceeding as Spain has done, and that we may consider it as definitive of our commission to them. I communicate it to congress, that they may take such other measures for leading on a negotiation as they may think proper.

You know that the third article of instructions, of October 29, 1783, to the ministers for negotiating peace, directed them to negotiate the claim for the prizes taken by the Alliance, and sent into Bergen, but delivered up by the Court of Denmark. You recollect, also, that this has been deferred, in order to be taken up with the general negotiation for an alliance. Captain Jones, desiring to go to America, proposed to me that he should leave the solicitation of this matter in the hands of Dr. Bancroft, and to ask you to negotiate it through the minister of Denmark at London. The delay of Baron Waltersdorf is one reason for this. Your better acquaintance with the subject is a second. The Danish minister here being absent, is a third. And a fourth, and more conclusive one, is, that, having never acted as one of the commissioners for negotiating the peace, I feel an impropriety in meddling with it at all, and, much more, to become the principal agent. I therefore told Captain Jones I would solicit your care of this business. I believe he writes to you on the subject.

Mr. Barclay sets out in two or three days. Lamb will fol-

low, as soon as the papers can be got from this ministry. Having no news, I shall only add, &c. &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 15 October, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me the 6th September. The act of congress of the 18th of August, which you inclose, shall be communicated as directed.

I have the honor to agree fully with you in your opinion, that "it is manifestly as much the interest of this country to be well with us, as for us to be well with them;" but this is not the judgment of the English nation; it is not the judgment of Lord North and his party; it is not the judgment of the Duke of Portland and his friends; and it does not appear to be the judgment of Mr. Pitt and the present set. In short, it does not at present appear to be the sentiment of anybody; and, I am much inclined to believe, they will try the issue of importance with us.

I have insisted upon the surrender of the posts with as much earnestness as prudence would warrant, but can obtain no other answer than certain hints concerning the debts and some other points, which are sufficient to convince me that the restoration of the posts will have certain conditions tacked to it. I have insisted in conversation, and have inquired in writing, but have not yet made a formal requisition, by a memorial in the name, and by order, of the United States. If I had done it, I should have compromitted my sovereign, and should certainly have had no answer. Whenever this is done, it should be followed up. I shall certainly do it, if I should see a moment when it can possibly prevail. If it is the judgment of congress that it should be done immediately, I should be glad of their orders, which shall be exactly obeyed. I should even wish they would prescribe to me the form of the memorial.

It is, indeed, as you observe, in the power of congress to take a certain step, which would be longer and more sensibly felt by Britain than the independence of the United States. You have not hinted at the nature of this measure. I can conceive of

more than one. Exclusion of British ships from all our exports, and a heavy duty upon British manufactures, is one; a defensive alliance with France, Spain, and Holland, is another. A case may happen in which this last might be justifiable. But, I presume, it will not hastily be adopted, nor ever, without Canada and Nova Scotia to be admitted into our confederation, and one half at least of the best of the English West India Islands, besides stipulations for the admission of our produce freely to the French West India Islands, and some articles into France, duty free, with similar stipulations with Spain and Holland. I hope, however, the first measure will be adopted forthwith, and not the smallest article of our produce be permitted to be exported in British bottoms.

Mr. Barclay is appointed to go to Morocco, and Colonel Franks goes with him. Mr. Lamb to Algiers, and Paul R. Randall, with him. There will be captives to redeem, as well as treaties to form.

I can obtain no answer from the ministry to any one demand, proposal, or inquiry. In this I am not alone; it is the complaint of all the other foreign ministers. The Dutch envoy, particularly, told me yesterday that he could obtain no answer to any of his memorials, some of which were presented as long ago as last April. The ministry, since the ill fortune of their studies in Ireland, have been in a lethargy; but they must soon awake. Mr. Pitt has long had with him, in the country, our project of a treaty, and it cannot be long before he comes to some determination. They have had lately evidence enough of the utility to them of the public hope of a commercial agreement with America. Holding up the idea of a treaty has rapidly raised the stocks. But I cannot entertain any sanguine hopes; for all experience, all evidence, seem to be lost upon this nation and its rulers. According to most appearances, a nation so entirely given up to the government of its passions, must precipitate itself into calamities greater than it has yet felt. I still think, however, that a decided opinion concerning the system it will pursue, cannot be formed before the opening of the next budget. With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 17 October, 1785.

Dear Sir, — It has been the general sense of our country since the peace, that it was their duty and their interest to be impartial between the powers of Europe, and observe a neutrality in their wars. This principle is a wise one, upon the supposition that those powers will be impartial to us, and permit us to remain at peace. But it is natural for England and France to be jealous of our neutrality, and apprehensive that, notwithstanding our professions, we may be induced to connect ourselves with one against the other. While such uncertainties and suspicions continue, we may find that each of these rival kingdoms will be disposed to stint our growth and diminish our power, from a fear that it will be employed against itself, and in favor of its enemy. If France could be sure of our perpetual alliance, it is to be supposed she would favor our increase in every thing which could be reconciled to her own interest. If England could obtain such an alliance with us, she, for the same reason, would favor our interests in all cases compatible with her own.

I need not point out to you instances in proof of such a jealousy in France. Yet it may not be amiss to refer you to some hints in Mr. Necker's late work.

Mr. Hartley, you will remember, dwelt much too often upon the subject of an alliance with England, for us to doubt that, however indecent the suggestion of such an idea was, he nevertheless entertained it. He has lately renewed this topic with me, and I gave him the only answer which can ever be given, namely, — that the moral character of the United States was of more importance to them than any alliance; that they could not, in honor, hear such a proposal; but that, if honor and character were out of the question, while England held a province in America, we could not safely forfeit the confidence of France, nor commit ourselves to the consistency of England.

But, to rise higher. When the King was pleased to say to me that he would be foremost in favor and friendship to the United States, when he should see a disposition to give the preference to this country, he probably meant more than we can

comply with. If a preference in commerce only had been meant, it was quite unnecessary to make it a future condition, because the ardor of our citizens in transferring almost the whole commerce of the country here, and voluntarily reviving that monopoly which they had long complained of as a grievance, in a few of the first months of the peace, imprudently demonstrated to all the world an immoderate preference of British commerce. It was impossible that we could give stronger proofs of a preference in this sense. If the royal expression, then, was a deliberate one, it must have intended something more, and something which the United States cannot agree to.

The British ministry, therefore, have now before them a question as important to the British empire as any that ever was agitated in it; whether by evacuating the posts, and fulfilling the treaty of peace in other points, and by opening their ports in the West Indies and on the continent of America, as well as in Europe, to our ships and produce, upon equal and fair terms, they shall insure the impartiality and neutrality of America; or whether, by a contrary conduct, they shall force them into closer connections of alliance and commerce with France, Spain, and Holland. A treaty of defensive alliance with France would deserve a long and careful deliberation, and should comprehend the East and West Indies. I mean our right to trade in them, as well as many other considerations, too numerous to hint at here. A new treaty of commerce might be made greatly beneficial to both countries. If we once see a necessity of giving preferences in trade, great things may be done. By the treaty between England and Portugal of 27th of December, 1703, Portugal promised to admit forever into Portugal the woollen cloths and the rest of the woollen manufactures of the Britons, as was accustomed, till they were prohibited by the laws; nevertheless, upon this condition, — "II. That is to say, that Great Britain shall be obliged forever hereafter to admit the wines of the growth of Portugal into Britain, so that, at no time, whether there shall be peace or war between the kingdoms of Britain and France, any thing more shall be demanded for these wines by the name of customs or duty, or by whatsoever title, directly or indirectly, whether they shall be imported into Great Britain in pipes, or hogsheads, or other casks, than what shall be demanded from the like quantity or measure of French wine,

deducting or abating a third part of the customs or duty. But if, at any time, this deduction or abatement of customs shall, in any manner, be prejudiced, it shall be just and lawful for his sacred royal Majesty of Portugal again to prohibit the woollen cloths and the rest of the British woollen manufactures."

This treaty, which the Irish call the Methuen treaty, from the name of the ambassador who signed it, and which they now claim the benefit of as Britons, although the Portuguese deny them to be Britons, and accordingly refuse their woollens, has had a vast effect both in Portugal and England. The consequence has been, that Portugal has now, for more than fourscore years, clothed herself in British woollens, like an English colony, and has never been able to introduce woollen manufactures at home; and the British islands have drank no other wine than Port, Lisbon, and Madeira, although the wines of France are so much better.

The United States may draw many useful lessons from this example. If, from the blind passions and rash councils of the Britons, they should be compelled to deviate from their favorite principle of impartiality and neutrality, they might make a new commercial treaty with France, for a term or forever exempting all the manufactures of France from one third or one half, or all the duties which shall be stipulated to be laid upon the English manufactures. In this case, what becomes of the manufactures of Britain? what of their commerce, revenue, and naval power? They must decline, and those of her rival must rise.

I hint only at these things. They open a wide field of inquiry, and require all the thoughts of the people. We should stipulate for the admission of all our produce, and should agree upon a tariff of duties on both sides. We should insist upon entire liberty of trade and navigation, both in the East and West Indies and in Africa, and upon the admission of our oil and fish, as well as tobacco, flour, rice, indigo, potash, &c. &c.

This country boasts of her friends and partisans in this and the other assemblies, particularly in New York and Virginia, and is confident we can do nothing, neither exclude their ships from our exports, nor lay on duties upon their imports into our States, neither raise a revenue, nor build a fleet. If their expectations are not disappointed, we shall be, and that in a

few months, not only a despised, but a despicable people. With the power in our own hands of doing as we please, we shall do nothing; with the means of making ourselves respected by the wise, we shall become the scorn of fools.

I am under embarrassments in treating with the ministry here, to know how far it is prudent in me to go, in urging upon them what the United States may do, or not do, with France. There would be danger of my committing congress imprudently; but, in conversation with friends, arguments may be casually, and by way of speculation only, put into their mouths, which they will not fail to use where they may or ought to have weight. Yet it is still uncertain whether any thing can have weight. The ministry behave as if they saw certain ruin coming upon the nation, and thought it of no importance in what shape it should appear. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 21 October, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — Yesterday, at eleven o'clock, I went, by appointment, to Lord Carmarthen's office, and was admitted to his Lordship as soon as he arrived from his house. As this was an hour earlier than the usual appearance of the foreign ministers at the secretary of state's levee, I had time for a long conversation with his Lordship.

At first I presented him a memorial, containing a requisition of immediate orders for the discharge of our citizens, particularly of Low; secondly, the correspondence between Governor Bowdoin and Captain Stanhope, with the act of congress upon it; and, thirdly, a letter concerning the questions some time ago communicated to your ministers at Paris, relative to their full powers, by the Duke of Dorset. These papers were left with his Lordship for his perusal, at his leisure; but, I conjecture, he laid them before the King in a conference after the drawing-room. After the communication of those papers, I had the honor to observe to his Lordship, that, although they contained matters of some importance, I most sincerely wished there were nothing of greater difficulty and more danger between the two countries. His Lordship wished so too. I added, that, as it

was wished on both sides, it was remarkable that the business was not done, as it seemed to be very easy to do; that it was much to be lamented, when the war was ended, and every thing essential which had been in contest was decided, that such circumstances as remained should impede the return of confidence between the two nations. I paused here, in hopes his Lordship would have made some reflection, or dropped some hint, from whence I could have drawn some conclusion, excited some hope, or started some fresh topic; but not a word escaped him. After a long silence, I told him that I hoped for an answer from his Lordship, concerning the posts upon the frontiers; not a word of reply. I said I was extremely uneasy concerning those posts; that, by the last accounts from America, there seemed to be danger of our being involved in an Indian war, merely from the circumstance of their being withheld; that his Lordship could not be unacquainted with the cruelty and barbarity with which those savages made war upon people the most innocent, peaceable, and defenceless; that an Indian war, by filling the gazettes and conversation with relations of horrors, naturally spread a greater alarm, and excited keener passions, than other wars which might be much more destructive and impoverishing; that, if such a war should happen in consequence of withholding the posts, it would enkindle a flame in America which might spread wider, and last longer, than any man could foresee; that I sincerely hoped the King's ministers would think seriously of it, and give orders for the evacuation; that I must insist on an answer.

Here, his Lordship, in broken sentences, expressed a wish that the ministry would answer everybody, and conveyed a hint that it did not depend upon him. I proceeded, upon this, to say, that, in a conference with Mr. Pitt, when I pressed him for an answer concerning the posts, although he was not explicit with me, I understood him to insinuate to me, that the surrender of the posts would be made conditional upon something respecting the debts. Here, I got something out. His Lordship said, — "To be sure, nothing could be done until the debts were paid." Paid! my Lord! that is more than ever was stipulated. No government ever undertook to pay the private debts of its subjects; and, in this case, nobody ever had such a thought. The treaty only stipulated that creditors should meet with no

lawful impediment to the recovery of their debts. But, said his Lordship, if lawful impediments have been thrown in the way — and this was all he could or would let out. I understood him to mean, that government, by putting an impediment in the way, had made itself answerable for the debts themselves. This was the first suggestion to me of such a thought; but it was so fully communicated, that I should not be surprised, if a requisition should be made to that effect. I proceeded with his Lordship, that the people in America saw the treaty violated in two important points, relative to striking objects. The negroes were carried off, and the posts were withheld. The last looked like a continuance of war. It was continuing a foreign army in their territory. These were the first breaches of the treaty; and, without them, I did believe that the debtors would not have had influence enough in any assembly to have procured an act or vote to impede the course of law; and, if the posts were now evacuated, and the negroes paid for, I did not believe the impediment would be continued longer than to the meeting of the assemblies. But, if the removal of these impediments should be made a condition precedent to the evacuation of the posts and payment for the negroes, I very much apprehended it would not be done. As the English had been first in the wrong, it was natural and reasonable to expect that they should be first to get right.

Finding it impossible to learn any thing from his Lordship of his own sentiments or those of his colleagues upon these points, after a pause of some time, I proceeded to some others, and said, —

Your Lordship alone was present, when the King was pleased to say to me, that when he should see a disposition in the United States to give this country the preference, he would be foremost in friendship to them. Yes, I was, said his Lordship. What greater preference, my Lord, can be expected or reasonably desired than has been given? It is not possible for one country to give another stronger proofs than America has given this, of a commercial preference. They have, with an imprudent ardor, discovered too early, and too immoderate a predilection to the commerce of this country, by voluntarily reviving, at the peace, almost the very monopoly which had been established before the war by the acts of parliament.

Can any other preference than a commercial one be thought of? No answer. Is it not receiving this disposition too coldly, my Lord, to meet it with obstructions to so many of our remittances? Is there not danger that the conduct of this country will change that disposition? Is it not easily changed? Does it not consist chiefly in mode and taste, setting aside what there is remaining of good will between the people? And, if credit is the lure, is it not easily counteracted? We have been used to buy Russian hemp and duck in London. Say we paid ten per cent. more than it would have cost us in Petersburgh, and that the advantage of having it upon credit was worth to the American merchant twenty per cent, by laying on a duty of ten per cent. on these articles imported from London more than when imported directly from Russia, would not the advantage of credit be wholly counteracted? By laying on fifteen per cent. more, would there not be an end forever to American importations of these articles by the way of London? Silesia linens are another article which we bought in London. May not this commerce be diverted entirely to Stetin and Embden by a similar duty? May not all sorts of manufactures in iron be bought in Germany, and all other manufactures in cotton, linen, metals, silk, velvet, wool, be in the same manner diverted from this to other countries in Europe, only by thus laying a bounty on the importation of them into America, to be paid by those who choose to purchase in England?

It has become fashionable here for gentlemen to speak diminutively of American trade, even among some who had magnified it while in opposition to Lord North. These could not certainly be sincere; but be the value of it what it may, can it be good policy in this country to divert it from herself and send it to her rivals? For example, could it be wise in the English to throw their own Newfoundland fishery into the hands of the French, merely to prevent Americans from supplying it with provisions and necessaries in their own bottoms? I was very much afraid the ministry had not yet duly considered upon what a delicate circumstance their fishery depended; how easily it might be lost, and how hardly recovered. Though the fishery was very beneficial to the public as a nursery of seamen, and a source of wealth, as it stood connected with various other

branches of business, yet, to the generality of individuals, it was not very profitable. With their utmost art, industry, and economy, they could but barely live. The Jamaica fish, as some call it, or the West India fish, as others named it, was one third part of the whole; and the preservation and sale of it was essential to the life of the fishery. Unfit for the European market, it had never found any other consumers than the negroes; and the English depended upon selling theirs to the French in their West India Islands. They have been able to undersell the French in their own islands. Why? Because their fishery at Newfoundland being supplied from the United States at a cheaper rate than the French could be from Europe, they could afford to sell their fish cheaper; but now the tables were turned. The French are supplied from the United States, and the English must be from Europe; the consequence of which must be, that the French will very soon be able to supply their own islands cheaper than the English can; and, when this happens, it will be very natural for them to prohibit all foreign fish, American as well as English. I left his Lordship to judge, if this was a probable means of increasing British seamen and navigation, and whether it was not probable, that, if the Americans saw the English, like rash gamesters, playing away their own fisheries into foreign hands, they would look out for themselves, and purchase of the French the admission of their fish into the islands, by stipulating some equivalent for it. Here his Lordship said he wished the council could be brought to take into consideration the relative situation of the two countries and their commerce. I was in hopes he would have said more, and waited long to hear; but, as it appeared he did not intend to be more particular, I said, it was surely necessary that something should be thought of and done with regard to the West India trade. It would be well to consider, whether the United States, if they found themselves excluded from the English islands, would not think it necessary to purchase a free admission of their flour and ships, as well as fish and other things, to perpetuity, by stipulating with the French Court some perpetual advantage, in some particulars, over the English commerce. Hitherto, it had been the policy of the States to be impartial; but, if they were once driven from this principle, I left his Lordship to judge how far they

might go, and ought to go. I asked his Lordship, whether it would not be just and wise in France to stipulate with us a perpetual admission of our oil to illuminate their cities; of our potash, duty free; of our tobacco, upon easier duties and better terms; in short, of all the produce of our country, upon better conditions, of our flour, fish, and ships into their islands, and of our ready built ships for sale, into all her dominions, if congress would stipulate with them a perpetual preference of French ships and manufactures over the English in America. If we would stipulate to lay on duties one third or one half heavier upon English than French navigation and merchandize, might we not make a profitable bargain? might we not do the same with any and every other trading nation in Europe? Necessity would force us to carry our trade where we could find a market for our produce; and, if England would not receive it upon living terms, we must carry it to Germany or the Baltic, to Holland or the Mediterranean, to Portugal or France, to Spain or even to the East Indies. All this was very patiently and civilly heard, but not a word of answer. I then asked, what could be the reason that the commerce between the United States and the remaining British Colonies, Canada and Nova Scotia, should not be encouraged; it had been found mutually beneficial heretofore, and our share of the profit of it had been a source of remittance to England, and would be again. Those colonies, especially Nova Scotia, would find it difficult to subsist without it for a long time. Finding, however, that his Lordship was determined to deliver no opinions, nor give the smallest hint from whence any conclusions or conjectures could be formed, I asked him for his advice, whether it would answer any good end for me to wait on any other of the ministers, as my Lord Camden and the Duke of Richmond, for example, and enter into more particular conversation with them upon these subjects. His Lordship said, Lord Camden was gone into the country, and the Duke of Richmond to the distant seaports, and would not be here for many weeks; but Mr. Pitt was here. I replied, that I had found Mr. Pitt, in the conversations I had had with him, candid and intelligent; and that, for any thing I knew, the affairs of the nation could not be in better hands; but he was in a critical situation; and, if a foundation should be laid of a final

alienation between England and America, it would be a deeper stain, a blacker blot upon his administration, than the independence of the United States had been upon that of Lord North.

It is not worth your while nor mine to endeavor to recollect more particularly this useless conversation, in which the reciprocity, as Lord North said on another occasion, was all on one side. I did not think it prudent to urge to his Lordship the possibility of any other new connections between the United States and other European nations, than commercial ones. The possibility and the probability of a more permanent, indeed of a perpetual, defensive alliance between France, Spain, Holland, and the United States, with even Ireland soliciting to be the fifth power, is so obvious to common sense, that one would think it could not escape the contemplation of the ministry.

There are persons in this kingdom sufficiently insane to say, that they will bring America to petition to come again under the government of this country; they will distress them till they break their faith with France, and then they say "we will spurn them." If the King and ministry entertain such thoughts, they are weaker than I ever thought them, and wickeder than anybody ever represented them. But, although insidious policy is not a novelty in this country, I do not believe them capable of such an excess of it at this time.

The true secret I conceive to be, a real ignorance and indecision what to do. They have discovered, by their Newfoundland bill and Irish propositions, a desire to preserve the principle of the navigation act against the United States. Both these experiments have been unfortunate. The first produced the Massachusetts and New Hampshire navigation acts; and the last procured a defeat in the parliament of Ireland. They are now confounded, and know not whether to persevere or to retreat; and, I am convinced, they have agreed together to observe a total silence with me until they shall come to a resolution. This reserve they maintain to all others, as well as to me, lest any hints might escape them, by which the various parties who are led by Shelburne, Buckingham, North, and Fox, should know how to begin the foundation of their opposition. They are really embarrassed; for, whatever treaty they make with us must be submitted to parliament, either before it is signed, or it must be made and signed, expressly subject to

the approbation or disapprobation of parliament; and they are at a loss to guess what they can carry through parliament, knowing the talents of the opposition, and the force of national prejudice and passion in favor of the navigation laws. They are afraid to attempt what they know they ought to do.

This being the state of things, you may depend upon it, the commerce of America will have no relief at present, nor, in my opinion, ever, until the United States shall have generally passed navigation acts. If this measure is not adopted, we shall be derided; and the more we suffer, the more will our calamities be laughed at. My most earnest exhortations to the States, then, are, and ought to be, to lose no time in passing such acts; they will raise our reputation all over the world, and will avail us in treating with France and Holland, as well as England; for, when these nations once see us in the right way, and united in such measures, they will estimate more highly our commerce, our credit, and our alliances. The question has been asked in France as often as in England, What have you to give in exchange for this and that? particularly, it was a constant question of the Marechal de Castries, What have you to give as a reciprocity for the benefit of going to our islands? When we have once made a navigation act, or shown that we can unite in making one, we may answer, we can repeal our act or our imposts in return for your repealing yours.

With regard to this country, I confess to you, I never should have believed, nor could have imagined the real situation of it, if I had not been here and resided here some time. I never could have conceived such an union of all parliamentary factions against us, which is a demonstration of the unpopularity of our cause. If the States do not make haste to confine their exports to their own ships, and lay on duties upon British merchandise which shall give a decided advantage to our own manufactures and those of Germany, France, and other nations, it will be to no purpose to continue a minister here; and I am sure I shall wish myself anywhere else rather than here. These are remedies which congress and the States can apply. I should hope they will not proceed farther at present; but, if these are found insufficient, I hope they will think of proceeding farther in commercial treaties with other nations, and reserve the resource of further alliances as a last resort.

The drafts already made, and the negotiations in Barbary, will exhaust your little fund in Amsterdam; and, before next March, all your servants in Europe must return home for want of means, even of subsistence, unless something is done; our countrymen should not expect that miracles will be wrought for their relief; if their affairs are not conducted with wisdom and activity, they will reap, most certainly, the fruits of folly and supineness.

Before I conclude, I will mention one more extravagance that I know is lurking in some hearts here. They would willingly embarrass Mr. Pitt in any rational plan of agreement with me, and cheerfully precipitate him into a war with the United States, if they could, well knowing that it would be his ruin. They think, and, I can add, they say, "that Canada and Nova Scotia must soon be ours; there must be a war for it; they know how it will end, but the sooner the better; this done, we shall be forever at peace; till then, never." But these people do not consider that this will involve us in unchangeable connections with France, and prove the final ruin of this country.

The stocks have lately risen to sixty-five and sixty-six. Whether this is owing to ministerial tricks, or the real affluence of money, it will raise the fund of pride and vanity in the nation in a much greater proportion, and make it more difficult for the minister to do what even he may think right with America. I must conclude, by repeating that my only hopes are in the virtue, resolution, and unanimity of my fellow-citizens.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

RICHARD HENRY LEE TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 24 October, 1785.

Dear Sir, — Having yesterday written a long letter to you, I have now only to request your attention to the following business, which is of very great importance to those whom it concerns, and who form a considerable portion of the citizens of these States. The representatives of those professing the church of England system of religion, having been lately assembled at Philadelphia, where lay and clerical deputies

from seven States were convened in general convention, for the purpose, among other things, of preserving and maintaining a succession of divines in their church, in a manner which they judge consonant to the gospel, and no way interfering with the religious or civil rights of others, have sent an address to the archbishops and bishops of England, proposing a plan for the consecration of American bishops. It is imagined that, before any thing is done in this business by the bishops of England, they will consult the King and ministry, who, it is apprehended, may now, as heretofore, suppose that any step of the kind being taken in England might be considered here as an officious intermeddling with our affairs that would give offence on this side the water. Should this be the case, the church of England members in congress have the greatest reliance on your liberal regard for the religious rights of all men, that you will remove mistaken scruples from the mind of administration, by representing how perfectly consonant it is with our revolution principles professed throughout all the States, that every denomination of Christians has a right to pursue its own religious modes, interfering not with others; that, instead of giving offence, it must give content, by evidencing a friendly disposition to accommodate the people here who are members of the church in question. In proof of this, congress did lately show their attention to the accommodation of this class of Christians, by communicating to the different executives your information from the Danish minister of that King's willingness to facilitate the business of ordination for our church. And the assembly of Virginia hath incorporated this society, under which act of incorporation the convention was held in that State, that sent both lay and clerical deputies to the general convention lately held in Philadelphia. I have the honor to be, &c.

Richard Henry Lee.

JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 1 November, 1785.

Dear Sir, — The inclosed letter from President Lee to you (of the subject and contents of which I am informed) will explain to you the design of the letters and papers which accompany this. The ones to the archbishops of York and

Canterbury are left open for your information; and that you may the more easily determine with yourself, either to deliver it in person, or merely to forward it by a proper conveyance. The attention you manifested to the Episcopalian church, in the affair of Denmark, has much obliged the members of it, and induced them to hope for your further good offices.

The convention are not inclined to acknowledge or have any thing to do with Mr. Seabury. His own high church principles, and the high church principles of those who ordained him, do not quadrate either with the political principles of our Episcopalians in general, or with those on which our revolution and constitutions are founded. They wish, therefore, to have a bishop to whom no objections of that kind can be made, and that is the object of their present measures. It will be much in your power to aid them in the attainment of it; and, for my own part, I think, your friendly interposition will neither disserve your country nor yourself.

To me, personally, bishops are of little importance; but, as our civil affairs are now circumstanced, I have no objections to gratifying those who wish to have them. I confess I do not like the principles of the non-jurors; and, I think, the less patronage such opinions meet with among us, the better.

With great and sincere esteem,

JOHN JAY.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 4 November, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — Yesterday, at the minister's levee, one of the foreign ministers put into my hands a Leyden gazette, in which I found announced to the public an *arrêt* of the King of France of the 18th of September, in which a bounty of ten livres per quintal is promised to any French merchants who shall import into the market of the French West India Islands, or of Spain, Portugal, or Italy, any fish of the French fisheries, and in which the impost upon all foreign fish is raised to five livres a quintal. This amounts to an encouragement of fifteen livres a quintal upon French fish in the West Indies.

As the supply of the French islands with fish is so material, perhaps so essential to our fishery, this ordinance deserves the

earliest and most serious attention of every man in America, who has any regard to our fisheries.

As the supply of the French islands with fish is of so much consequence to the British fishery, I took occasion, in a conference with the Marquis of Carmarthen, to mention it to him, and to observe to him, that I left it to his Lordship to consider, whether the British fisheries could be supported against the influence of this ordinance, without the freest communication of supplies from the United States. His Lordship thought it deserved consideration, and that was all the oracle would deliver. I afterwards mentioned it to Mr. Fraser, his Lordship's under secretary of state.

The Marquis of Carmarthen, that I may let you into enough of his character to account for his conduct, is a modest, amiable man, treats all men with civility, and is much esteemed by the foreign ministers, as well as the nation, but is not an enterprising minister; is never assuming, and, I believe, never takes upon himself to decide any point of importance, without consulting the cabinet. He never gives his private opinion; but, in all things which respect America, I do not believe that he or any other of the ministry has yet formed any. We shall, I think, learn nothing of their designs till they are brought forth in parliament in the course of the winter and spring.

Mr. Pitt commenced his career with sentiments rather liberal towards the United States; but, since he has been prime minister, he has appeared to give ear to the chancellor and Lord Gower, Mr. Dundas, and Mr. Jenkinson, with their instruments, Erving, Chalmers, Smith and others, so much as to have departed from his first principle. He has tried the experiments of the Newfoundland bill and the fourth Irish proposition; but, finding the fatal success of both, he may be brought back to the system with which he set out; but I doubt it; or rather, I am convinced he never will, until he is obliged to it, by our States adopting navigation acts.

There is published this morning, in the Chronicle, the proceedings at Charleston on the 15th August, which look very encouraging. If the legislature of South Carolina lay partial restrictions on the ships of such nations as have no treaty of commerce with the United States, I think it cannot be doubted that all the other States will come into the measure; because

there is none which will suffer a greater temporary inconvenience by it. These measures have a tendency to encourage the naval stores of North Carolina so much, that she will be a gainer. But the principal danger is, that these restrictions may not be sufficiently high to give a clear advantage to the ships of the United States.

I cannot repeat to you too often, sir, that all my hopes are founded upon such exertions in America. The trade with America must come under consideration of parliament in the renovation of the intercourse act, if not of the Newfoundland act; and their deliberations will be influenced by nothing but American navigation acts. I fear there are not enough of these yet made, nor likely to be made this year, to have much effect.

This nation is strangely blinded by prejudice and passion. They are ignorant of the subject beyond conception. There is a prohibition of the truth, arising from popular anger. Printers will print nothing which is true, without pay, because it displeases their readers; while their gazettes are open to lies, because they are eagerly read, and make the paper sell. Scribblers for bread are wholly occupied in abusing the United States; and writers for fame, if there are any such left in this country, find the public applause wholly against us. The rise of the stocks has established Mr. Pitt; and, if he were willing, he would scarcely be able to do right, until America shall enable him and oblige him. I am, sir, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 5 November, 1785.

Dear Sir, — The Chevalier de Pinto, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from Portugal, after a long absence by leave of his Court, is lately arrived here from Lisbon. Upon several occasions, when I met him at Court and upon visits, he told me that he had orders from his Court to confer with me, upon the project of a treaty between the United States and Portugal; but he never descended to particulars till yesterday,

when he called upon me, and said that, before he left Lisbon, his Court had learned that I was in England, and had charged him to enter into conference with me, concerning that project of a treaty which had been transmitted to his Court by the Count de Souza; that the Portuguese ministry, notwithstanding their high esteem for their ambassador in France, knowing that he lived in the country, and was in distress, did not choose that the negotiation should be any longer conducted by him, but had committed the project to their envoy at the Court of England, and had instructed him to assure me that the Court of Lisbon was sincerely desirous of entering into a treaty of commerce with the United States of America, a power with which it was more convenient for Portugal to trade than any other. But there were some things in the plan proposed, which were inadmissible; particularly, the Americans could never be admitted into the Brazils. It was impossible. It was the invariable maxim of their Court, to exclude all nations from those territories; and, having himself served for some years as governor-general of one of the Brazils, he knew it was a policy from which his Court could never, on any condition, depart; that it was a great compliment to him, to be preferred to the Count de Souza for the conduct of such a negotiation; that he made no pretensions to such merit, but readily acknowledged the superiority of the ambassador; but it was the pleasure of his Court, and he had no right to dispute it.

I answered, that I had no authority to treat, but in conjunction with Mr. Jefferson, the minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of Versailles; that the full power to treat with Portugal was to Mr. Jefferson and me jointly; so that I could conclude nothing without his concurrence, nor carry on any conferences without communicating them to him. To this I supposed he could have no objection. He said, none at all.

His first instruction was, he said, to confer with me concerning the mutual wants and several productions of our countries, which might be the objects of commerce. His countrymen wanted, he said, grain. I asked, if they did not want flour. He said he was not precisely instructed concerning flour; but they had mills in Portugal which they wished to employ. I replied, that, in every negotiation, I thought there ought to be

a mutual consideration of each other's profits and losses, advantages and disadvantages, so that the result might be equitable, and give satisfaction on both sides; that a commerce founded upon compacts made upon this principle, would ever be carried on with more pleasure and to better effect; that we had mills which we wished to employ, as well as Portugal, and mills as costly and as good as those of any nation. In this respect, then, our pretensions were mutual and equal; but there were other particulars in which, without benefit to Portugal, the loss to the United States would be very great. The commodity was more difficult to preserve in grain than in flour; it was more exposed to the insect and to heat, both at home and upon the passage, by which means the loss upon wheat was much greater than that upon flour; that it would not be equitable, then, for Portugal to receive wheat to the exclusion of flour; that this was a point of so much importance, that it would facilitate the treaty, and encourage the commerce, if his Court should think fit to agree to receive our flour.

He said he had not precise instructions, but he would write to his Court particularly upon this subject. The next article wanted by the Portuguese was lumber of various sorts, particularly staves for pipes, in large quantities. They wanted, also, ship timber, pitch, tar, and turpentine, potash for their manufactures of glass, iron, masts, yards and bowsprits, furs, ginseng, and, above all, salt fish. The consumption of this article in Portugal, he said, was immense; and, he would avow to me, that the American salt fish was preferred to any other, on account of its quality. Here, you see, says the Chevalier de Pinto, is a catalogue of articles which the Portuguese will want in larger or smaller quantities; now, what are the articles you can take in America in exchange? It behoves my nation to inquire what they can supply yours with; otherwise the balance in your favor may be too ruinous to us. It happens unluckily for Portugal, that the Americans have no occasion for our principal commodities, which are tobacco, rice, indigo, &c., the produce of the Brazils. I replied, that the United States had been used to take considerable quantities of Madeira, Lisbon, and port wines, fruits, olive oil, salt, &c. He asked, why we could not take tea from Lisbon. They imported from the east large quantities, and very good. The English East India Company

had purchased of them this year teas to the amount of forty thousand pounds, and he thought they could sell it to us cheaper than we bought it elsewhere. They could supply us, likewise, with other East India goods. Perhaps we intended to supply ourselves by a direct trade to India. He was glad to hear that our first enterprises had succeeded; but, if we continued to take any part of our consumption from Europe, they could supply us as cheaply as any other nation. Sugar, too, the produce of the Brazils, they could furnish to us, of as good quality as English or French, and much cheaper. If we should think of manufactures among ourselves, they could let us have wool of the same quality with the Spanish, and cotton in any quantities we might want. If we made chocolate, they could sell us cocoa. Indeed, they had woollen manufactures, and could afford us cloth as good and cheap as other nations.

These were things, I replied, in which the merchants on both sides should speculate. If the United States should proceed in the plan already begun, of encouraging their own manufactures, the raw materials of wool and cotton would be in demand; and, if they persevered in their measures for encouraging their own navigation, they would want large quantities of hemp, sail cloth, &c., from the Baltic; and, for what I knew, they might find their account in taking sugars, cotton, cocoa, &c., at Lisbon, to carry as remittances to Petersburgh and Stockholm. They might even, upon some occasions, purchase tobacco, rice, and indigo for the same market, as well as the Mediterranean, if that sea should be open to our ships. But all these things would depend upon the facilities given to our commodities by the treaty. Nothing would contribute so much to promote the trade, as their receiving our flour without duties or discouragements; our ready built ships, too, were an article of importance to us. He said he did not know that our ready built ships were prohibited. I asked, if they could not take our spermaceti oil to burn in their lamps, or for any other uses. He said, no; they had such an abundance of oil made in the country, of olives which grew there, that they had no occasion for their own spermaceti oil, which they sold to Spain; they had now a very pretty spermaceti whale fishery which they had learned of the New Englanders, and carried on upon the coast of Brazil. I asked, if they could not take our spermaceti candles, and burn

them in their churches. He said, they made some wax in Portugal and some in Brazil; but he would own it was not enough for their consumption; the surplus they bought in Italy and Barbary at a dear rate. At length, I observed to the Chevalier that Portugal abounded in two articles which would be extremely convenient to my fellow-citizens, in which she might always balance accounts with us to our entire satisfaction, whether we should take more or less of their other commodities. These were silver and gold, than which no kind of merchandise was in greater demand, or had a higher reputation. The Chevalier thought the taste of his countrymen so much like ours, that they had rather pay us in any thing else.

I added, if the conduct of the Court of St. James should oblige the United States to make a navigation act, their commerce must increase with Portugal. A navigation act! said he. Why, there is not a nation in Europe that would suffer a navigation act to be made in any other, at this day. The English navigation act was made in times of ignorance, when few nations cultivated commerce, and no Court but this understood or cared any thing about it; but, at present, all courts were attentive to it. For his part, if he were minister in Portugal, he would not hesitate to exclude from her ports the ships of any nation that should make such an act. I replied, that I did not mean a navigation act against any nation but this; but, if the English persevered in enforcing their act against us, we could do no other than make one against them. The Chevalier said we should be perfectly in the right. The Courts of Europe had a long time cried out against this act of the English. If it were now to begin, it would not be submitted to.

This observation is just, and it may be carried farther. I do not believe the British navigation act can last long; at least, I am persuaded, if America has spirit enough, *umbone repellere umbonem*, that all other nations will soon follow her example, and the apprehension of this would be alone sufficient, if thinking beings governed this island, to induce them to silence America, by giving her satisfaction. But they rely upon our disunion, and think it will be time enough, when we shall have shown that we can agree.

The Chevalier concluded the conference, by saying that he would write to his Court for farther information and instruc-

tions; and, as I understood him, for full powers. But, before he went away, he said he had orders from his Court to inquire of me what were the sentiments of congress upon the head of ministers and consuls, whether they would send a minister and consul to Lisbon. His Court had a mind to send somebody to the United States; but etiquette required that congress should send in return to Portugal. I answered, that, in the project of a treaty, which was in his possession, there was an article that each party should have a right to send consuls; so that, when the treaty was concluded, Portugal would be at liberty to send when she would. As to ministers, I had no instructions; but there could be no doubt, that, if their Majesties of Portugal thought proper to send an ambassador of any denomination, he would be received by congress with all the respect due to his character and his sovereign. He said, if there was a treaty, there ought to be ministers. I could not answer to this particularly, for want of instructions; but congress had, as yet, but few ministers abroad; and, indeed, they had not found many gentlemen disposed to quit the delights of their own families and connections, and the esteem of their fellow-citizens, for the sake of serving in Europe; and here ended the conversation.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. I forgot to mention in its place, that I asked the Chevalier about our ships being admitted to the Portuguese island of Macao in the East Indies. He said, that would be of importance to us; for he did not see how the commerce with China could be carried on without the use of that island, as there were certain seasons of the year when European ships, and American, too, he supposed, could not be admitted into Canton. But our ships should enjoy the benefit of their island as fully as any nation in Europe.

You will perceive, sir, by this conference, what is more and more manifest every day; that there is, and will continue, a general scramble for navigation. Carrying trade, ship building, fisheries, are the cry of every nation; and it will require all the skill and firmness of the United States to preserve a reasonable share of their own. They have brought treaties of commerce so much into fashion, that more have been made since

the American war, and are now in negotiation, than had been made for a century before. Courts which never made one before, are now proposing them to several others. Portugal is supposed to be pushing for one with Russia; and, if we have heretofore been discouraged and thwarted in any attempts, it was by those who meant to be beforehand with us in proposals which they taught us to believe it unnecessary and beneath our dignity to make. France does not now think it beneath her dignity to propose a treaty with Russia, nor do French or English newspapers, under the direction of their Courts, think it beneath them to fill all Europe with reports of our disunion, and of the want of powers in congress to make treaties, in order to keep us back.

The fatal policy of obstructing and delaying our treaties of commerce, especially with England, has thrown American merchants into their present distress, and not only prevented our acquiring fresh advantages in trade by the revolution, but taken from us many sources which we enjoyed before. Our countrymen, partly from penury, and partly from fondness, have been too easily drawn into the snare.

J. A.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 11 November, 1785.

Dear Sir, — There is no better advice to be given to the merchants of the United States, than to push their commerce to the East Indies as fast and as far as it will go.

If information from persons who ought to know may be depended upon, the tobacco and peltries, as well as the ginseng of the United States, are proper articles for the China market, and have been found to answer very well; and many other of our commodities may be found in demand there. But there is another resource which may prove of equal value at present. There are many persons in the European factories in India, particularly the English, who have accumulated large property, which they wish to transmit to Europe, but have not been able to do it, on account of the distance and the scarcity of freights.

These would be glad to sell us their commodities, and take our bills of exchange upon Europe or America, payable in twelve or eighteen months, possibly in longer periods.

These facts are known to individuals in America, but will probably be concealed from the public at large, lest the speculators and adventurers should be too numerous for the profit of a few.

The States may greatly encourage these enterprises by laying on duties upon the importation of all East India goods from Europe, and, indeed, by proceeding in time to prohibitions. This, however, may never be necessary. Duties, judiciously calculated, and made high enough to give a clear advantage to the direct importation from India, will answer the end as effectually as prohibitions, and are less odious, and less liable to exceptions.

We should attend to this intercourse with the east with the more ardor, because the stronger footing we obtain in those countries, of more importance will our friendship be to the powers of Europe who have large connections there. The East Indies will probably be the object and the theatre of the next war; and the more familiar we are with every thing relating to that country, the more will the contending parties desire to win us to their side, or, at least, what we ought to wish for most, to keep us neutral.

Much will depend upon the behavior of our people who may go into those countries. If they endeavor, by an irreproachable integrity, humanity, and civility to conciliate the esteem of the natives, they may easily become the most favored nation; for the conduct of European nations in general, heretofore, has given us a great advantage.

East India manufactures in silk and cotton, &c., are prohibited in England; and, as we have no such prohibitions in America, because we have no such manufactures for them to interfere with, we may take them to a great advantage.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 24 November, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I was yesterday honored with your letter of the 14th of October, accompanied with the gazettes and the act of congress of the 27th September.

You will learn from Mr. Dumas's letters, as well as by the public papers, that the treaty of defensive alliance between France and Holland was signed at Paris on the 10th of this month. The vain exertions of the cabinet of St. James to prevent it, are so far from being a secret, that the English, or Orange party, which is the same, have inserted them in their own Courier du Bas Rhin. The offers are there stated to have been, the restitution of Negapatnam, the renunciation of the navigation of the Moluccas, the payment of the millions to the Emperor, the warranty of the new treaty with the Emperor, and the alteration of the navigation act in favor of Holland.

Sir James Harris, with his secretary of legation and three clerks, are said to have been very busy night and day, but all to no purpose. It is not at all to be wondered at, that British ministers should be alarmed; the only wonder is, that they did not foresee and prevent the danger. Two years ago, by an honest settlement with America, and less costly offers to Holland, they might have maintained their rank among the powers of Europe. It is now lost forever.

The loss of the empire of the seas, which their ambition has long aspired to, and which their arrogance has long claimed, would be a benefit to mankind, and no real evil to them; but they will now find it difficult to defend their liberty upon the seas; and, if the United States of America should accede to this defensive alliance upon any reasonable terms, think of it as they will, their navigation, their possessions in the east and the west, and their empire, will be at mercy.

I am not informed whether congress have any such measure in contemplation; but, if they have, they ought not to delay it from any expectation of any thing that I can do here. So far from entertaining any sanguine hopes, I think there is scarcely a possibility that I should do any thing. There are divisions in the ministry. Thurlow, Gower, Dundas, and Jenkinson are of

the old leaven, and the King will have them or some other of the same stamp to govern. Pitt is but a tool and an ostensible pageant, a nose of tender virgin wax; he could not carry in parliament, nor in the cabinet, any honest system with America, if he meant to do it; but he is himself very far from being steady in his American politics, any more than Camden or Richmond; and Sidney and Carmarthen are ciphers. This is naked truth; but I should be unworthy of your confidence, if I did not expose it to you, although your prudence and that of congress will not proclaim it to the world.

This great event of the French and Dutch alliance, must awaken the feelings of this nation, if they have any left; and it affords the only opportunity which has yet presented for offering, with any propriety, a memorial concerning the evacuation of the frontier posts. It would have looked somewhat too emphatic, to have gone with a memorial the first moment of the arrival of the news; and it would be imprudent to delay it till the whole impression is worn off. As a medium, then, I have concluded, on the day of the next stated conferences of the foreign ministers, which will be next Thursday, before the drawing room, to wait on Lord Carmarthen with a memorial requiring, in the name of the United States, the evacuation of all the posts.

It will not be done, however, and I shall have no answer. They have not the courage to refuse, any more than to comply. I have no answer to any of my letters or memorials to the ministry, nor do I expect any before next spring; perhaps not then.

There is no resource for me in this nation. The people are discouraged and dispirited, from the general profligacy and want of principle, from the want of confidence in any leaders, from the frequent disappointments and impositions they have experienced in turn from all parties. Patriotism is no more; nor is any hypocrite successful enough to make himself believed to be one. Fox, and his friends and patrons, are ruined by the endless expenses of the last elections, and have no longer any spirit or any enterprise. North and his friends are afraid of impeachments and vengeance, and, therefore, will avoid all hazardous experiments, by which the popular cry might be excited.

I see nothing, therefore, to prevent the States from completing their measures for the encouragement of their own manufactures and navigation, or from deliberating upon a new treaty of commerce with France, or even a new alliance. You might probably purchase a market for your ready built ships and your oil, &c., in France, and the admission of your flour and all other things to their islands, by stipulating to lay greater duties upon British than French ships and goods, to lay duties upon English West India rum, in favor of French brandies, &c. But in these things I think we need not be in haste.

Mr. Barclay and Mr. Franks are gone to Morocco; and Mr. Lamb and Mr. Randall to Algiers, as I suppose.

Russia, as well as Portugal, are piqued at present with this Court; and Count Woronzow has several times lately asked a friend of mine, why the United States did not make advances to his mistress. Our commissions for treating with the powers of Europe expire next June, long before we shall have completed the business. Congress will determine whether to renew them.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 24 November, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I should have added in my letter of this day, that Shelburne professes to be steady to the principle which he adopted at the peace; and, if he were to come in, he would do something if he could; but, as an Irishman, he is hated both by the English and Scotch nobility. As Marquis of Lansdown, he is envied for his elevation over older families; and he seems to have no sufficient connections to support a vigorous administration, nor do I learn there is any probability of his coming in.

Indeed, I think this nation will have dangerous convulsions. The nobility are poor, in debt, and distressed; and, at present, the great families are all out of power. Ireland will give them trouble; and no one can say what events may turn up from day to day. If the stocks can be supported, however, the calm will continue; but it is doubtful whether this can be.

There is no question more frequently asked me by the foreign ministers, than what can be the reason of such frequent divi-

sions of States in America, and of the disposition to crumble into little separate societies, whereby there seems to be danger of multiplying the members of the confederation without end, or of setting up petty republics, unacknowledged by the confederacy, and refusing obedience to its laws. In the infancy of societies, men have generally been too little informed in their understandings, and too much given up to the government of their passions, to associate in large communities; but experience has shown them the ill effects of too many divisions. Spain was not long ago divided into ten or twelve kingdoms; ten of them are now united in one. France was once divided into twelve States; now all incorporated into one kingdom. Scotland was formerly divided into two kingdoms, and England into seven. These are all now in one. One must read many volumes of history to see the miseries arising from those petty divisions of mankind, and the immense expense of blood and treasure which it cost them to learn, by experience, the necessity of uniting in larger bodies.

I have not information enough of the facts, in any particular instance, to apply these reflections to any particular case; but the frequent accounts we have in Europe of new States springing up out of fragments of old ones, and the numerous proposals of more, do us much harm abroad. They are considered as proofs of an impatience of temper, a restlessness of disposition, that will give us much inconvenience, will weaken us, and endanger our confederation.

It is the earnest wish of all who desire our prosperity, that this dangerous spirit may be checked, as far as it can be, consistently with reason and justice.

It gives me pleasure to learn that Doctor Franklin is arrived in so good health, and that he is happy in Philadelphia; and I wish very sincerely that his great age and singular reputation may give him a dominion over the minds of the people, sufficient to reconcile them to certain amendments in the constitution of Pennsylvania, without which, that respectable commonwealth, from the very nature of man and society, must forever remain a prey to unbalanced parties.

I have not had the time to send you copies of the letters which passed between me and Mr. Fagel and Mr. Dumas, upon my arrival here. If Mr. Dumas has done it, I am much obliged

to him; and it will be unnecessary for me to repeat them. I wish a minister may be soon sent there. But it is doubtful whether anybody can be found to accept of an appointment abroad; and you will not be surprised at the reluctance.

With great regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

WILLIAM WHITE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 26 November, 1785.

SIR, — I presume on the circumstance of being not entirely unknown to your Excellency, to offer to you the inclosed papers, knowing that the president of congress has already written to you on the subject of them.

As you formerly, sir, communicated to congress information of the friendly dispositions of the Danish government and clergy towards the Episcopal church in these States, it may be proper for me to state to you the reason of the non-acceptance of their kind offer of ordaining for us, however gratefully we acknowledge the favor, as well as your Excellency's liberal intention to serve us on that occasion.

I believe I might mention that there are objections against the succession of the Danish bishops; but I have not sufficiently informed myself of the constitution of that church to say any thing more on this head.

I might also mention, that, before the information reached us of a door being opened in that quarter, an act had passed the British parliament, allowing the Bishop of London to admit to the orders of priest and deacon, persons out of allegiance to the King, without administering the oaths.

But, sir, it is the wish of all the well informed members of our church, to be independent and self-governed, principally from a conviction of the unhappy influence which a foreign spiritual jurisdiction has always maintained in civil matters wherever it has been acknowledged. This we have severely felt in the late war; and, if persevered in, it must at last be fatal either to our church or to the commonwealth, in those States, at least, where the members of our communion are a majority of the people. There is nothing wanting to the establishing of our constitution, but the obtaining the episcopal succession in

the first instance from the English bishops, which, we trust, will fix our church on such a footing as must be desired by all who wish well to the present civil system of confederate America. Should any political objection arise from the British ministry, on the point of delicacy, as to intermeddling with the concerns of this country, I cannot doubt of your Excellency's endeavors to remove it.

With my best wishes, &c.

I have the honor to subscribe myself,

WILLIAM WHITE.

P. S. The specimens of the prayer book herewith inclosed go as far as the press has yet furnished.

TO SECRETARY JAY.[1]

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 3 December, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — I am anxious to convey to you, if I can, in as strong a light as that in which I see it myself, the impossibility of our doing any thing satisfactory with this nation, especially under this ministry, that the States may neither neglect nor delay any measure which they would judge necessary or expedient, upon the certainty that England will not alter her conduct. In order to do this, I must be allowed to write freely things which congress ought to know, but to keep secret. I know how much I expose myself; but as I have hitherto made it my rule, as much as I could, to conceal nothing which I thought necessary to be known, whatever might be the consequence to myself, I shall not now begin a new system, and shall only request that a reasonable caution may be observed, not to injure a man merely for discharging a disagreeable part of his duty.

The King, I really think, is the most accomplished courtier in his dominions. With all the affability of Charles II., he has all the domestic virtues and regularity of conduct of Charles I. He is the greatest talker in the world, and has a tenacious

[1] This letter was sent in cipher. And it appears in the *Diplomatic Correspondence* in a shape almost unintelligible. It is now taken from the original letter.

memory, stored with resources of small talk concerning all the little things of life, which are inexhaustible. But so much of his time is, and has been consumed in this, that he is, in all the great affairs of society and government, as weak, as far as I can judge, as we ever understood him to be in America. He is also as obstinate. The unbounded popularity, acquired by his temperance and facetiousness, added to the splendor of his dignity, gives him such a continual feast of flattery, that he thinks all he does is right; and he pursues his own ideas with a firmness which would become the best system of action. He has a pleasure in his own will and way, without which he would be miserable, which seems to be the true principle upon which he has always chosen and rejected ministers. He has an habitual contempt of patriots and patriotism, at least for what are called in this country by those names, and takes a delight in mortifying all who have any reputation for such qualities, and in supporting those who have a contrary character. Upon this principle only can I account for the number of tories who were forced into the administration of the Earl of Shelburne, the Duke of Portland, and of Mr. Pitt, and for the immoderate attachment to American refugees which has appeared in all of them.

Mr. Pitt is very young. He has discovered abilities and firmness upon some occasions; but I have never seen in him any evidence of greater talents than I have seen in members of congress, and in other scenes of life in America, at his age. I have not yet seen any decided proofs of principle, or patriotism, or virtue; on the contrary, there are many symptoms of the want of these qualities, without which, no statesman ever yet appeared uniformly great, or wrought out any memorable salvation for any country. In American affairs he has oscillated like a pendulum, and no one can yet guess when he will be fixed. His attention appears to have been chiefly given to two objects, — preserving tranquillity and raising the stocks. His attention to these would have been laudable, if he had not neglected others equally essential in the end, though not so urgent for the present. The discontents of the nation, arising from their late disappointments, disgraces, and humiliations, as well as the pressure of taxes, would have broken out into seditions, if the ministers had not studiously avoided every thing

which could raise a clamor, or operate forcibly upon popular passions; and, if the stocks could not have been supported, all would have been distraction at once. With all his care, he has barely escaped, from more furious tumults, at the expense of a few stones thrown at his carriage, and a few executions in effigy. The stocks he has raised; and, if he can keep them up, they will support him, and intoxicate the nation to such a degree, that I presume it will be impossible for him to pursue that system towards America and Ireland, which is indispensable for the complete preservation of the remainder of the empire.

The chancellor, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Jenkinson, and Lord Gower, being of the old set of King's friends, it may be easily supposed that they are masters of his character, that they think and feel like him, and, consequently, that they embarrass Mr. Pitt whenever his principles interfere with the King's. To this, probably, is owing the late accession to the league in Germany, which the chancellor of the exchequer is thought to have opposed. To the same cause we may ascribe the undecided conduct towards Holland, where Sir James Harris is as complete a cipher, as the Baron de Lynden and I have the honor to be at St. James's.

The King has been amused by his old deceivers, who are very much alike in America, Holland, and Ireland, by assurances that the Prince of Orange and his party, would get the upper hand, and that the populace would rise to De Witt the patriots. Under this fond delusion, the time has been dreamed away, and those offers were delayed until they were too late to have any effect, which, if they had been made in season, would have preserved the friendship, or, at least, the neutrality of the Dutch to this country.

Lord Camden and the Duke of Richmond, if they ever had any just notions of the relation between England and America, are become soured by the company they keep; and, if they are not inimical, they are at least peevish and fretful upon every subject that concerns us. Lord Carmarthen is rich and of high rank, very civil and obliging, but is not enough of a man of business to have influence in the cabinet, or to project or conduct any thing. Lord Sidney, with less wealth and a lower rank, has all the other parts of the same character. If these traits of character are just, you will easily be convinced

that we cannot expect from the present ministry any reasonable arrangement with America for some time.

If we look to opposition, we see no better prospects. Lord North is supposed to have great influence; but how? By being at the head of the landed gentlemen, which is but another term for the tory interest. If he should depart from their system, he would lose all consideration. Mr. Fox has never been steady in American politics; and he has not at present the spirit to take any decided part. The Marquis of Lansdown would be more liberal; but he has no chance to come in; and, if he had, he would not be able to carry any plan into execution, so numerous and violent from all quarters would be the opposition to him. The Marquis of Buckingham has some good opinions of American commerce; but, although he is celebrated for minute details of information in American affairs, by all I can learn of him, he has lost his judgment and the true system in the chaos of these very minutiæ, and besides he is extremely odious to great multitudes of the first people.

Add to all these unfavorable considerations, that the stocks are at a great height, and the nation consequently in high spirits. As they have now evidence, as they think, that their commerce flourishes, and their credit is established, without a treaty with the United States, and without opening the West Indies or Canada, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to us, without taking off the alien duty upon oil, or admitting our ready built ships for sale, they will not now think it necessary to do any of these things. The general opinion is, that an act of parliament will be made at the ensuing session, placing the United States upon the footing of the most favored nation, and then let things take their course; let the United States do as they please, lay on duties or prohibitions, or make navigation acts, as they judge proper.

France is not idle amidst all this. The language they hold is that of perpetual and universal peace. Their ambassadors in all the Courts of Europe speak in this style. The corps diplomatique here have it familiarly in their mouths, that the Courts of London and Versailles have now the best dispositions towards each other, and that there is every prospect of a long peace between them; and there is such a fund of gullibility in this nation, that these lullabies soothe them into a

perfect security. Indeed, it is possible the peace may be maintained for ten or a dozen years; long enough for the English to get a little money to go to war again. But if, at the end of fifteen or twenty years, the navies of Bourbon and Holland should be pitted against that of Great Britain, and especially, if the United States should join their privateers and aids to the confederacy, the crisis of the British empire will then be complete, and its destruction certain. Some men see it, but posterity and futurity, though not very distant, appear to be less attended to in this country, at present, than in any other in the world. Present advantage is all they aim at, present evil all they hope to shun.

No Briton would deserve the character of a statesman, without a comprehensive view of the interests of the nation, relative to their liberties and form of government, relative to their manufactures, commerce, and navigation, relative to their foreign dominions in Asia, Africa, America, and in Europe, relatively to all the other powers of Europe, especially their ancient enemies, who have always endangered their existence, I mean the House of Bourbon; and their ancient friends, who have assisted in supporting them, and rearing up their wealth and power, I mean the Dutch and the United States of America; and all these relatively to the interests of posterity and future ages. But I have not seen the least appearance of any man in the three kingdoms, among the men in power, who answers this description. Lansdown is the most like it, but his integrity is suspected, his selfishness is acknowledged, and his influence far from great.

The posts upon our frontier give me great uneasiness. The ministers and people are so assured of peace with all their neighbors in Europe, that they hold all we can do in indifference. They think that if we should raise an army and take these posts, as we have a right to do, it would not oblige them to go to war with us; but, if we should march an army to Quebec, and take it, and another to Nova Scotia, and take that, it would be no great harm to them; if we should fit out privateers against their trade, they could easily send a line of frigates along our coast, that would do us more harm. So that they are quite easy. But they rely upon it, that we shall not raise an army to take the posts. The expense and difficulty they know will be great, and, therefore, they think they may

play with us as long as they please. The refugees are doing all they can to persuade the King and ministry to build other forts on their side of the lakes, to build a fleet of armed ships upon the lakes, and to negotiate with all the Indian nations, in order to attach them to their side. If these people can prevail, our posts will not be evacuated until this new system is accomplished. The resolutions of some of the United States, staying proceedings at law for old debts, and some other resolutions concerning the tories, represented to have been in some instances contrary to the treaty, will be the pretence.

In short, sir, I am like to be as insignificant here as you can imagine. I shall be treated, as I have been, with all the civility that is shown to other foreign ministers, but shall do nothing. I shall not even be answered; at least, this is my opinion. But congress will, no doubt, insist upon an answer; perhaps it may be most convenient to wait till spring and until the session of parliament is over, that we may have a full knowledge of their designs. It is most certain, that what is called high language, which you and I have heard so much of in the course of our lives, would be misplaced here at this time. It would not be answered with high language, but with what would be more disagreeable and perplexing, — with a contemptuous silence.

To borrow an expression from the late Governor Bernard, I find myself at the end of my tether; no step that I can take, no language I can hold, will do any good, or, indeed, much harm. It is congress and the legislatures of the States, who must deliberate and act at present.

The only system they can pursue, to help themselves, is, to complete their regulations for the encouragement of their own manufactures and navigation, to consider of more intimate commercial connections with France and other nations of Europe, to push their trade to the East Indies, and, perhaps, to extend even their political connections with France and Holland. How far it will be wise to go in these projects, I pretend not to judge; but, I hope, they will proceed with caution and deliberation. The United States stand upon high ground, and they will consider whether it would not even be descending to form any closer political connections at present. They are certainly at present on "vantage ground," if

they can unite in a system. If not, they must trust to the chapter of accidents. With great regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 6 December, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — If the facts which I have had the honor to state to you in my preceding letters are credited, I think it will appear that the connections of these kingdoms with foreign powers, every idea of the balance of Europe, the dominions of Great Britain in Asia and America, and all considerations of posterity, are sacrificed to a momentary tranquillity and credit; from which premises, it will be easy to conclude what will be the effect of the memorial, a copy of which is here enclosed, and which I shall certainly present to-morrow. It will not be answered in any manner. It is generally said "things must take their course, we must take our chance and meet the consequences of all the combinations of our rivals, we must risk it," &c. It is commonly said that ministry will bring in an act of parliament, at their next session, placing the United States upon the footing of the most favored nation, and then let them do what they please.

Thus, I find myself at a full stop. I shall not neglect any opportunity, to say or do whatever may have the least tendency to do any good; but it would be lessening the United States, if I were to tease ministers with applications, which would be answered only by neglect and silence. I shall transmit you every thing I can, which may afford you any information; but I think congress cannot avoid instructing me to demand an answer, and to take my leave, and return to America, if it is not given me in a reasonable time in the spring.

It is now with the States to determine, whether there is or is not a union in America. If there is, they may very easily make themselves respected in Europe; if there is not, they will be little regarded, and very soon at war with England, as I verily believe. I should advise all the great seaport towns to think a little of the means of defence, put the fortifications they have in as good order as they can, furnish themselves with arms

and ammunition, and put the militia through the continent upon as good a footing as may be.

I have little reliance on our negotiations in Barbary; the presents we have to offer, will, I fear, be despised. We shall learn by them, however, what will be necessary, and congress will determine what we must do. Mr. Lamb and Mr. Randall are gone. Mr. Barclay has been detained by Monsieur Beaumarchais' accounts, but I hope will go soon.

If all intercourse between Europe and America could be cut off forever, if every ship we have were burnt, and the keel of another never to be laid, we might still be the happiest people upon earth, and, in fifty years, the most powerful. The luxuries we import from Europe, instead of promoting our prosperity, only enfeeble our race of men and retard the increase of population. But the character of our people must be taken into consideration. They are as aquatic as the tortoises and sea-fowl, and the love of commerce, with its conveniences and pleasures, is a habit in them as unalterable as their natures. It is in vain, then, to amuse ourselves with the thought of annihilating commerce, unless as philosophical speculations. We are to consider men and things as practical statesmen, and to consider who our constituents are, and what they expect of us. Upon this principle we shall find that we must have connections with Europe, Asia, and Africa; and, therefore, the sooner we form those connections into a judicious system, the better it will be for us and our children.

We may now take measures which may save us many miseries and a vast expense of blood. We shall find that nothing can be done in Europe, but by keeping up the dignity of the United States; and that dignity, in Europe, is a very different thing from that which is and ought to be dignity in America.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

A MEMORIAL.

The subscriber, minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America, has the honor to represent to the ministry of his Britannic Majesty, that, by the seventh article of the preli-

minary treaty of peace between his Majesty and the United States of America, signed at Paris, on the thirtieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two, confirmed by the definitive treaty of peace, signed at Paris, on the third day of September, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, it was stipulated that his Britannic Majesty should, with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction, or carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons, and fleets from the said United States, and from every port, place, and harbor within the same, leaving in all fortifications the American artillery that may be therein.

That, although a period of three years has elapsed since the signature of the preliminary treaty, and of more than two years since that of the definitive treaty, the posts of Oswegatchy, Oswego, Niagara, Presque Isle, Sandusky, Detroit, Michillimachinac, with others, not necessary to be particularly enumerated, and a considerable territory around each of them, all within the incontestable limits of the said United States, are still held by British garrisons, to the loss and injury of the said United States.

The subscriber, therefore, in the name and behalf of the said United States, and in obedience to their express commands, has the honor to require of his Britannic Majesty's ministry, that all his Majesty's armies and garrisons be forthwith withdrawn from the said United States, from all and every of the posts and fortresses hereinbefore enumerated, and from every other port, place, and harbor within the territory of the said United States, according to the true intention of the treaties aforesaid.

Done at Westminster, this thirtieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, 9 December, 1785.

Dear Sir, — I went to Court yesterday morning, if not in despair, with very faint hopes of ever receiving an answer to

any letter or memorial of mine to the British ministry. I went early, but found three of the foreign ministers before me. The rule is to admit them to his Lordship in the order in which they arrive. In my turn I was shown into his Lordship's apartment, received very politely, as usual, and very much surprised to be accosted by him with "Mr. Adams, I am about to write to you officially. I have received a letter from Lord Howe relative to your communication concerning the behavior of a captain of a man of war at Boston. The admiralty letter is very long, and I shall send you a copy of it. I am also to answer your memorial concerning the seamen. The ship is ordered and expected home from the East Indies, and when she arrives, the man you applied for will be discharged; and orders are gone to Portsmouth to discharge the other sailor whom you mentioned." This last requires some explanation, as I have not mentioned it before to you. Some time ago, I received a letter from a man at Portsmouth who called himself an American, and desiring me to apply for his discharge. But, as I had no orders from congress concerning him, nor any other information than his own letter, I thought it not safe to apply officially in his behalf. When I delivered my memorial demanding the discharge of the sailors in general, I showed this man's letter to his Lordship, and left it with him; and it has had, it seems, a better fortune than I expected.

I replied to his Lordship that I was very happy to hear that I was soon to have an official answer; for that, whenever we could come to communicate officially and freely, I hoped we might gradually remove all difficulties. We fell, then, into some conversation upon another point. But, as nothing new was said on either side, and I could learn nothing new from him, it would be fatiguing you to no purpose to repeat it. One thing, however, his Lordship said, in the course of conversation, namely, — "That he could not yet give me any satisfaction upon any other point, because nothing was yet determined. Mr. Pitt had all my papers under consideration, and had not yet determined any thing."

At length I presented to his Lordship the memorial of the 30th November, a copy of which is here inclosed. I do not expect an answer till next summer. But I thought it safest for the United States to have it presented, because, without

it, some excuses or pretences might have been set up, that the evacuations had not yet been formally demanded.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 4 January, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — I have only time to acquaint you that, since my last, there have been some appearances of an intention in ministry to take up American affairs. Lord Carmarthen and Mr. Pitt have certainly had conferences with committees of merchants, who have represented to them the necessity of arrangements with the United States upon terms which will give satisfaction. Nevertheless, I have no confidence in this at all; and I think that congress and the States should not relax in any measure in consequence of it.

Mr. Pitt did say to Mr. Campbell, the principal man among them, that Mr. Adams, the American minister, was well disposed to a friendly settlement, and had made some propositions to the King's ministers, who were also well disposed. He was very inquisitive whether they had seen Mr. Adams. They answered they had not, and that they were not known to him in the business. This was true, in a literal sense; but, in fact, they had taken pains to give me circuitous information that they had been consulted by Lord Carmarthen, and to desire of me such information as I could give them; and I had, by means of Colonel Smith, conveyed to the sight of a person in their confidence some papers, containing such matter as I thought might be trusted to them in such a mysterious way. The representation they have made is very strong, as they say; but I cannot yet obtain a copy of it. They pretend to say that Mr. Pitt assured them their report had given him new light, and they think America may have whatever she desires, except a free trade with the West India Islands. This will prove only a delusion, for, if the ministry really are desirous of an equitable settlement, I am well persuaded they cannot yet carry it in parliament; so that I hope the States will persevere in their own measures, and that even all the Southern States will, at least, lay heavy duties upon the tonnage of such nations as

have not treaties with us, and prohibit the importation, in their bottoms, of any merchandises, except the produce of the country to which they belong. Even the importation of Irish linens in British bottoms should be forbidden, as well as Silesia linens, hemp and duck from Russia, and iron from Sweden, wines from Portugal, goods from the East Indies, &c.

With great regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN JAY.

London, 4 January, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — A day or two after the receipt of your letter of November 1st, and that of President Lee, which came with it, I wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Colonel Smith, for an hour when I might have the honor to pay my respects to his Grace; and was answered, very politely, that he would be glad to have the honor of seeing me next day, between eleven and twelve. Accordingly, I went yesterday, and was very agreeably received by a venerable and a candid prelate, with whom I had before only exchanged visits of ceremony.

I told his Grace that, at the desire of two very respectable characters in America, the late president of congress and the secretary for the department of foreign affairs, I had the honor to be the bearer, to his Grace, of a letter from a convention of delegates from the Episcopal churches in most of the southern States, which had been transmitted to me open, that I might be acquainted with the contents; that in this business, however, I acted in no official character, having no instructions from congress, nor indeed from the convention; but I thought it most respectful to them, as well as to his Grace, to present the letter in person. The Archbishop answered that all he could say, at present, was, that he was himself very well disposed to give the satisfaction desired; for that he was by no means one of those who wished that contention should be kept up between the two countries, or between one party and another in America; but, on the contrary, was desirous of doing every thing in his power to promote harmony and good humor. I then

said that if his Grace would take the trouble to read two letters, from Mr. Lee and Mr. Jay, he would perceive the motives of those gentlemen in sending the letter to my care.

I gave him the letters, which he read attentively and returned, and added that it was a great satisfaction to him to see that gentlemen of character and reputation interested themselves in it; for that the Episcopalians in the United States could not have the full and complete enjoyment of their religious liberties without it. And he subjoined that it was also a great satisfaction to him to have received this visit from me upon this occasion. He would take the liberty to ask me, if it were not an improper question, whether the interposition of the English bishops would not give uneasiness and dissatisfaction in America. I replied that my answer could only be that of a private citizen; and, in that capacity, I had no scruple to say that the people of the United States, in general, were for a liberal and generous toleration. I might, indeed, employ a stronger term, and call it a right, and the first right, of mankind to worship God according to their consciences; and, therefore, I could not see any reasonable ground for dissatisfaction, and that I hoped and believed there would be none of any consequence.

His Grace was then pleased to say that religion, in all countries, especially a young one, ought to be attended to, as it was the foundation of government. He hoped the characters which should be recommended would be good ones. I replied that there were in the churches in America able men, of characters altogether irreproachable, and that such, and such only, I presumed would be recommended.

I then rose to take my leave, and his Grace asked me if he might be at liberty to mention that I had made him this visit upon this occasion. I answered, certainly, if his Grace should judge it proper.

Thus, sir, I have fulfilled my commission, and am

Yours, &c.

John Adams.

JAMES BOWDOIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 12 January, 1786.

Sir, — I am honored by your Excellency's letter of the 2d of September by Mr. Storer.

The navigation act of Massachusetts having been found to militate with the French treaty of commerce, and to exclude our fish from the Levant, by excluding the subjects of the Italian and other states coming with their vessels for it, when our own, in attempting to carry it to them, would be intercepted by the Algerines, it was judged expedient to repeal it in part, so that it now operates in full force only against the subjects of Great Britain and their property. A copy of the repealing act will be sent to you, and also of an act passed by the legislature of Rhode Island at their last session.

I have transmitted copies of our repealing act to the executives of the several States, and warmly urged a similitude of measures, without which the United States cannot hope to bring about an alteration in the commercial system of Britain. That system, in my idea of it, is clearly opposed to her own interest, considered in all its parts, and in a complex view of it. It is very true, their encouragement of their whale-fishery, by suffering the alien duty on oil to depress ours, will increase their shipping in this branch, increase their seamen, and, in several other ways, be advantageous to them. To a person that looks no farther, it would appear that this was good policy; and the goodness of it would be inferred from the advantages arising. But when he should extend his view, and see how that stoppage of the American whale fishery, by depriving the Americans of so capital a mean of paying for the woollen goods they used to take of Britain, must, at the same time, occasion the American demand to cease, or be proportionately diminished, not to mention the risk of a change or deviation of the trade from the old channel, he will calculate the national profit and loss that arises from that stoppage.

Three thousand tons of oil was the usual annual quantity produced by the whalemen at Nantucket; all of which was shipped to England, at an average price of £35 per ton, making about £105,000

The whole of which went to pay for and purchase a like amount of woollens and other British goods; nine tenths of the value of which are computed to arise from the labor of the manufacturer, and to be so much clear gain to the nation. The other tenth, therefore, being deducted, gives the national gain arising from the industry of the Nantucket whalemen, and the capital employed in that business, namely, £94,500, £10,500

£94.500

without the nation's paying a shilling for the risk of insurance, or any other risk whatever.

On the change of trade, pursuant to the new regulations, the British merchants must employ a large capital in the whale fishery, whose products we will suppose equal to that of the Nantucket, ... £105,000

They will have made an exceeding good voyage, if the whole of that sum should be equal to one half of the cost of the outfits; though, from many of the vessels not meeting with fish, and from a variety of accidents to which such a voyage is subject, it probably would not be a quarter. The whole of the product goes towards payment of the outfits and charges of the voyage, and a large sum must be advanced for the second voyage, &c.

Now, although this mode of commerce would be productive of some national benefits, yet, considered in a comparative view with the benefits resulting from the former mode, they would be found of little importance. A like comparison may be made with other branches of commerce, particularly the British West Indian, and the result will be found the same. For the sake, then, of gaining pence and farthings, Britain is sacrificing pounds by her new regulations of trade. She has a right to see for herself; but, unhappily, resentment and the consequent prejudices have so much disordered her powers of vision, that it requires the skilful hand of a good political optician to remove the obstructing films. If she will not permit the application of your couching instruments, or, if applied, they can work no effect, the old lady must be left to her fate, and abandoned as incurable.

But it is to be hoped, not so much on her account as our own, that they may be successful. One ground of hope is the private negotiation, which Mr. Nathaniel Barrett is gone to

France to perfect and execute, relative to their taking our whale oil duty free, and, in lieu of it, giving, at an agreed rate, according to their quality, such French manufactures as are best suited to our market; excepting a certain proportion of the oil, which must be paid for by bills of exchange, to raise money for the men engaged in the voyage. About two months ago, Mr. Barrett sailed for France with letters for Mr. Jefferson and the Marquis de Lafayette; and, if he succeeds, a great revolution in trade will probably be the consequence, and France, on the principle of reciprocal benefit, exclude Britain from all trade with America. This appears to me so probable, that, if you could impress the British ministry with the same idea, you would find little difficulty to bring about a commercial treaty with them, perfectly agreeable to your own mind, and to the wishes of the United States. An interchange of a few letters on this subject, with Mr. Jefferson, would give you the present state of the negotiation.

With the most perfect regard, &c.

James Bowdoin.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 19 January, 1786.

Dear Sir, — I am favored with yours of the 27th December, and am obliged to you for what you said to the Count de Vergennes, in the case of the Chevalier de Mezières.[1] You may always very safely depend upon it, that I never have given, and never shall give any opinion against the letter or spirit of the treaty with France. In this case, I have never given any opinion at all; indeed, I have never been consulted. The Marquis de Bellegarde, with whom I had a slight acquaintance at the Hague, called upon me here, after the death of General Oglethorpe, and desired that Mr. Granville Sharp might call upon me, and show me some papers relative to the General's lands in Georgia and South Carolina. Mr. Sharp called accordingly, but showed me no papers. I never looked nor inquired into

[1] This was a nephew of General Oglethorpe, who as an heir had a claim upon his estates in Georgia, and whose case was taken up by the French government. It is fully treated in the collection of Mr. Jefferson's writings made by T. J. Randolph. Vol. i. pp. 376–385.

the case, but advised both to write and send powers of attorney to our old friend, Edward Rutledge, who was able to give them the best advice and information, and all the assistance which the law allows in their claim. The treaty with France never occurred to me, nor was suggested to me in the conference; nor did I ever give any opinion on any question concerning it. I have never written a line to America about it, nor put pen to paper. The supposition, that any opinion of yours in private conversation, or of mine, if any such had been given, which never was, should influence courts and juries in Georgia or Carolina, is ridiculous. The case, as you state it, indeed appears to be unconnected with the treaty entirely; and, if sound sense can remove a prejudice, what you have said upon it will put an end to the jealousy.

Does the Count de Vergennes pretend that the United States of America are bound by their treaty with France never to lay a duty on French vessels? The Massachusetts and New Hampshire navigation laws leave French ships, subjects, and merchandises upon the footing *gentis amicissimæ*. Does the treaty require more?

I have been informed by Richard Jackson, Esq., whose fame is known in America, that a question has been referred to a number of the first lawyers, common and civil, among whom he was one, "Whether the citizens of the United States, born before the Revolution, were still entitled in the British dominions to the rights of British subjects." Their unanimous determination was, that such as were born before the signature of the definitive treaty of peace, are still to be considered as British subjects, if they claim the rights in the British dominions. This decision was, I believe, more upon analogy and speculation, than upon any established principle or precedent, since ours is, I believe, a new case. How it has been determined in America, I know not; but, I think, not the same way. However the lawyers and judges may determine it, I wish the assemblies would adopt it as a rule, respecting estates held before the separation, since a generosity of this kind will be more for their honor and their interest, as I conceive, than a rigorous claim of an escheat, however clear in law.

The Chevalier de Pinto informs me that he has written to his Court for explanations upon some points, and expects an answer

in a few days. When it arrives, he will call upon me. In the mean time, he says, his Court is solicitous to send a minister to America, but that etiquette forbids it, unless congress will agree to send one to Lisbon. They would send a minister to New York, if congress would return the compliment; but, if congress will not send a minister plenipotentiary, they wish to send a resident, or even a *chargé des affaires;* but etiquette will not permit this, unless congress will send a resident or *chargé des affaires* to Portugal.

Is it really expected or intended that Eden shall do more than Crawford did? Pray let me know if there is any probability of a treaty in earnest between France and England.

. . . . . .

Mr. Voss, from Virginia, has just now called upon me, and shown me a state of the debt of that commonwealth, which is very consolatory. It is dated 12th November, 1785, and signed B. Stark, H. Randolph, and I. Pendleton. The whole debt at that period was only £928,031.9. The annual interest £55,649.15.3. Pension list, £6000. Officers of government, £29,729. Criminal prosecutions, £5,509. Thus it appears that £96,878.15.3. annually will pay the whole interest of their debt and all the charges of government. Virginia, by this, may sing O be joyful. On the 19th November, the lower house resolved to invest congress with full powers to regulate trade; and, in the mean time, that all commerce should cease with the British colonies in the West Indies and North America, and that all ships of foreign nations, with whom we have no treaties of commerce, should be prohibited from importing any thing but the production of their own country. It seems they revoked these resolutions again, because the house was thin, but with design to take them up in another day. This, perhaps, may not be done until next year; but it is a strong symptom of what is coming. Mr. Voss gives me a comfortable account of the trade in peltries, as well as grain and tobacco. Every vessel that arrives brings fresh comfort; and I fancy our commerce with the East Indies will be effectually secured by the reception of Mr. Pitt's bill. Mr. Voss tells me, that the British debts will not be permitted to be sued for until the treaty is complied with by the English, by the evacuation of the posts and payment for the negroes. Lord Carmarthen told me,

yesterday, that he was laboring at an answer to my memorial concerning the posts, and that he should complete it as soon as he could get all the information he was looking for concerning the British debts; for that complaints had been made by the creditors here to ministry. I am glad I am to have an answer; for, whatever conditions they may tack to the surrender of the posts, we shall find out what is boiling in their hearts, and by degrees come together. An answer, though it might be a rough one, would be better than none. But it will not be rough. They will smooth it as much as they can; and I shall transmit it to congress, who may again pass the smoothing-plane over it. I expect it will end in an accommodation; but it will take eighteen months' more time to finish it.

I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 21 January, 1786.

Dear Sir, — On Wednesday, the Chevalier de Pinto informed me that he had written to Lisbon for explanations from his Court upon certain points; that he expected an answer in a few days, and that, as soon as he should receive it, he would call upon me, and proceed in the negotiation; that, in the mean time, he would not disguise from me the solicitude of his Court to send a minister to congress. Etiquette forbade that the Court of Portugal should send an ambassador, minister plenipotentiary, or envoy to America, until the United States should agree to send one of equal rank to Lisbon; but, if congress had any reasons for not sending ministers of so high an order, they might send a resident or *chargé d'affaires*. I answered him, that I had heard it was the intention of congress to send a consul, but that I could say no further.

Lord Carmarthen, on Thursday, told me he was at work upon an answer to my memorial concerning the posts, and should complete it as soon as he could collect some further information concerning the debts, of the obstructions to the payment of which, the ministry had received complaints from persons in this country who were interested in them. You

may conclude from this, as well as I, what kind of answer it will be. I am very glad that I am to have an answer. Whatever it may be, it will lead to further eclaircissement and a final accommodation. Yet I think the answer will not come before the spring. It will take eighteen months more to settle all matters, exclusive of the treaty of commerce.

Mr. Eden has said, within a few days, that he believed there would be a treaty of commerce with the United States of America within a year or two. He may wish to be employed in it; for, however sanguine he may be of his success at Versailles, I shall lose my guess, if he ever accomplishes a commercial treaty with that Court. He may, however. This nation would now crouch to France for the sake of being insolent to us. The disposition to crush the weak, is almost always attended with that of cringing to the strong. Arrogance to inferiors is ever servile to superiors. But a treaty with France, such as she would accept, would be hurtful to such numbers, and raise such an opposition, that I cannot yet believe Mr. Eden will be permitted to sign one. The term of two years is expired, and Del Campo has done nothing. Crawford is returned without doing any thing, as I suppose.

The true secret of the appointment of Mr. Eden, as I conceive, is, the Court of Versailles was offended that Crawford was not allowed to do any thing, and used some sharp expressions which intimidated the ministry. Eden was appointed for two ends, — first, to appease the wrath at Versailles; and, secondly, to keep up a mysterious, delusive hope in the English nation. Perhaps, too, the ministry are afraid of commercial speculations between France and Ireland. These conjectures are precarious, and no great stress should be laid on them.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO COUNT SARSFIELD.

Grosvenor Square, 21 January, 1785.

Dear Sir, — If I were so fortunate as you are, and could pass the water from Dover to Calais in three hours, I would go to Paris and dine with you in some of your American parties; but I can never get over from Harwich to Helvoet, nor from

Dover to Calais, in less than seventeen hours, and, sometimes, not under three days.

I have all the pieces relative to the United Provinces, excepting the Pays de Drenthe. I have one piece upon slavery, one upon women, and two introductions to the subject of fiefs. That is all that I have.[1]

Among all my acquaintance, I know not a greater rider of hobby-horses than Count Sarsfield. One of your hobby-horses is, to assemble uncommon characters. I have dined with you two or three times at your house, in company with the oddest collections of personages that were ever put together. I am thinking, if you were here, I would invite you to a dinner to your taste. I would ask King Paoli, King Brant, Le Chevalier d'Eon, and, if you pleased, you might have Mr. and Mrs. —— with whom you dined in America. How much speculation would this whimsical association afford you!

How goes on your inquiry into fiefs? If you do not make haste, I may, perhaps, interfere with you. I have half a mind to devote the next ten years to the making of a book upon the subject of nobility. I wish to inquire into the practice of all nations, ancient and modern, civilized and savage, under all religions, — Mahometan, Christian, and Pagan, — to see how far the division of mankind into patricians and plebeians, nobles and simples, is necessary and inevitable, and how far it is not. Nature has not made this discrimination. Art has done it. Art may then prevent it. Would it do good or evil to prevent it? I believe good, think what you will of it. How can it be prevented? In short, it is a splendid subject; and, if I were not too lazy, I would undertake it.

I want to see nations in uniform. No church canonicals, no lawyer's robes, no distinctions in society, but such as sense and honesty make. What a fool! what an enthusiast! you will say. What then? Why should not I have my hobby-horse to ride as well as my friend? I'll tell you what. I believe this many-headed beast, the people, will, some time or other, have wit enough to throw their riders; and, if they should, they will put an end to an abundance of tricks, with which they are now curbed and bitted, whipped and spurred.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] See volume iii. p. 280, note.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

Grosvenor Square, 6 February, 1786.

My Lord, — I have the honor of transmitting to your Lordship a copy of a letter of the 21st of December last, from his Majesty's consul-general in the United States to their secretary of state for the department of foreign affairs, which has been laid before congress,[1] who have been pleased to direct me to communicate it to his Majesty, with this information, that the complaint stated in it being in general terms, and unsupported by any particular facts or evidence, they do not think it necessary or proper to take any measures in consequence of it; and, with this assurance, that, as it is their determination the treaty of peace shall be punctually observed by their citizens, and that his Majesty's subjects shall enjoy in the United States all the rights which friendly and civilized nations claim from each other, so they will always be ready to hear every complaint which may appear to be well founded, and to redress such of them as, on investigation, shall prove to be so. Let me request the favor of your Lordship to lay this communication before his Majesty.

Your Lordship will permit me to avail myself of this opportunity of remarking, that the office of consul-general does not extend to matters of this kind; neither the rights of commerce nor of navigation being in question; and, therefore, that it was delicacy towards his Majesty, rather than a sense of the propriety of such an application from a consul-general, which induced congress to treat it with this mark of attention.

As the United States, my Lord, have a minister plenipotentiary residing at this Court, in consequence of a proposition to that purpose, made by his Britannic Majesty's minister, through his Grace, the Duke of Dorset, his ambassador at Paris, your Lordship will permit me to propose to the consideration of his Majesty's ministers the expediency, as well as propriety, of sending a minister plenipotentiary from his Majesty to the

[1] Sir John Temple's complaint that copies of public records were refused to the loyalists in the United States. It is omitted in this collection. See the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States from* 1783 *to* 1789. Vol. vi. pp. 8, 9.

United States of America. I am authorized, my Lord, to give assurances that congress expect such a minister, and are ready to receive and treat him in a manner consistent with the respect due to his sovereign. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 17 February, 1786.

SIR, — At a late levee, the King, in conversation with one of the foreign ministers, was pleased to say "that the Tripoline ambassador refused to confer with his ministers, and insisted on an audience; but that nothing had been said at it more than that Tripoli and England were at peace, and desirous to continue so." His Majesty added, "all he wants is a present, and his expenses borne to Vienna and Denmark."

If nothing more was said at the audience, there are not wanting persons in England who will find means to stimulate this African to stir up his countrymen against American vessels. It may reasonably be suspected that his present visit is chiefly with a view to the United States, to draw them into a treaty of peace, which implies tribute, or at least presents; or to obtain aids from England to carry on a war against us. Feeling his appearance here to be ominous, like that of other irregular bodies, which, "from their horrid hair, shake pestilence and war," I thought, at first, to avoid him; but, finding that all the other foreign ministers had made their visits, and that he would take amiss a longer inattention, it was judged necessary to call at his door, for the form; but, when the attempt was made, which was last evening, so late that there was no suspicion of his being visible, the ambassador was announced at home, and ready to receive the visitant. It would scarcely be reconcilable to the dignity of congress to read a detail of the ceremonies which attended the conference; it would be more proper to write them to harlequin, for the amusement of the gay at the New York theatre.

It is sufficient to say, that his Excellency made many inquiries concerning America, the climate, soil, heat, cold, &c., and observed, "it is a very great country, but *Tripoli is at war with it.*" In return, it was asked how there could be war

between two nations, when there had been no hostility, injury, insult, or provocation on either side. His Excellency replied, that Turkey, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco were the sovereigns of the Mediterranean; and that no nation could navigate that sea without a treaty of peace with them; that America must make such treaties with Tripoli first, then with Constantinople, then with Algiers and Morocco, as France, England, and all the other powers of Europe had done. A secretary brought him some papers, one of which was put into my hands. It was a French translation of a full power from the Pacha, Dey, and Regency of Tripoli to treat with all the powers of Europe, and to manage all the foreign concerns of his country, without limitation of time or place. The original commission, in his own language, was also produced and shown. It was observed that America was not named in it. But it was replied, that the power was universal to manage every thing, and that a treaty might be made at once, or, at least, that conferences might be held, and the result written to Tripoli and America for further instructions. "What time was required to write to Congress and receive an answer?" "Three months, at least." "That was too long, but he should remain here some time. You may call here to-morrow or next day, with an interpreter, and we will hear and propose terms."

As his Excellency expected to gain by the negotiation as much as the American knows he must lose, you will perceive the former was the most eager to promote it. When Mr. Jefferson's answer to a letter upon this subject shall arrive, it will be proper to learn his terms; but there is reason to believe they will be too high for your ministers to accept, without further instructions.

This is the substance of a conference, which was carried on with much difficulty, but with civility enough on both sides, in a strange mixture of Italian, lingua Franca, broken French, and worse English.

This minister appears to be a man of good sense and temper.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 20 February, 1786.

Sir, — Yesterday, the Tripolitan ambassador sent a message by a Dr. Benamor, an English Jew most probably, who has formerly resided in Barbary and speaks the Arabic language, as well as the Italian and lingua Franca, to inform me that he wished to return his visit in the same friendly and respectful manner; and that, as he had much at heart a treaty between the Barbary and American States, he wished it might be soon. It was agreed that he should be received at noon.

At twelve, his Excellency came in ceremony, accompanied with his secretary, and Benamor, for an interpreter, "whom he had chosen in preference to the interpreter assigned him by the Court, because he was sorry to see that this nation was not so steady in its friendship to America as the French. The French consul at Tripoli congratulated him upon his appointment, and hoped he would meet in England a minister with whom he might make a treaty of peace with America; but he was sorry to say he found here much ill will to the Americans, and a desire to prevent him from seeing the American minister. For this reason, he would have nothing to do with the Court interpreter. It was the delight of his soul, and the whole pleasure of his life, to do good; and he was zealous to embrace an opportunity, which now presented itself, of doing a great deal. The time was critical, and the sooner peace was made the better; for, from what passed before he left home, he was convinced if the treaty should be delayed another year, it would, after that, be difficult to make it. If any considerable number of vessels and prisoners should be taken, it would be hard to persuade the Turks, especially the Algerines, to desist. A war between Christian and Christian was mild, and prisoners, on either side, were treated with humanity; but a war between Turk and Christian was horrible, and prisoners were sold into slavery. Although he was himself a mussulman, he must still say he thought it a very rigid law; but, as he could not alter it, he was desirous of preventing its operation, or, at least, of softening it, as far as his influence extended. The Algerines were the most difficult to treat. They were eager for prizes,

and had now more and larger ships than usual. If an application should be made first to Algiers, they would refuse; but when once a treaty was made by Tripoli, or any one of the Barbary States, they would follow the example. There was such an intimate connection between all, that, when one made peace, the rest followed. Algiers had refused to treat with Spain, in defiance of all her armaments, until Tripoli interposed, and then they relaxed at once. He called God to witness," that is to say, he swore by his beard, which is a sacred oath with them, "that his motive to this earnestness for peace, although it might be of some benefit to himself, was the desire of doing good."

When he was informed that congress had received some friendly letters from the Emperor of Morocco, and that an agent was gone to treat with his Majesty, he "rejoiced to hear it, and doubted not that this agent would succeed, as the Emperor was a man of extensive views, and much disposed to promote the commerce of his subjects." As it was now apparent that his principal business here was to treat with the United States, and that no harm could be done by dealing frankly with him, the commission of congress to treat with Tripoli was shown to him, as well as those to Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis. He "was rejoiced to see them; and, although he could not answer for Algiers, he would undertake for Tunis and Tripoli; and he would write in favor of any person who might be sent, or go with him in person, to assist in the completion of peace with all the States of Barbary, which was more than he had ever before said to any ambassador or minister in Europe." It was then proposed that his Excellency should mention the terms which he might think proper to propose; but he "desired to be excused at present; and that to-morrow evening, at his house, he might have an opportunity of explaining himself more particularly." This was agreed to.

It was then observed, that, although America was an extensive country, the inhabitants were few in comparison with France, Spain, and England; nor would their wealth bear any proportion to that of these nations, or of Holland; that we were just emerged from the calamities of war, and had, as yet, few ships at sea, especially in the Mediterranean, so that the Barbary corsairs could not expect to make any considerable

number of prizes. "God forbid," was his reply, "that I should consider America upon a footing at present, in point of wealth, with these nations. I know very well that she has but lately concluded a war, which must have laid waste her territories; and I would rather wish to leave to her own generosity the compliments to be made upon the occasion, than stipulate any thing precisely."

This man is either a consummate politician in art and address, or he is a benevolent and wise man. Time will discover whether he disguises an interested character, or is indeed the philosopher he pretends to be. If he is the latter, Providence seems to have opened to us an opportunity of conducting this thorny business to a happy conclusion.

Colonel Smith will go to Paris to communicate the whole to Mr. Jefferson, and entreat him to come over to London, in order to finish as much as possible of it immediately, and to agree with the Portuguese minister at the same time. Mr. Jefferson has long projected a visit to England, and this will be a good opportunity. No notice will be taken of it, publicly, in America; and his real errand will be concealed from the public here.

If the sum limited by congress should be insufficient, we shall be embarrassed; and, indeed, a larger sum could not be commanded, unless a new loan should be opened in Holland. I doubt not a million of guilders might be obtained there, upon the same terms with the last two millions. This would enable congress to pay their interest in Europe, and to pay the French officers, who are uneasy. With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 22 February, 1786.

My Dear Sir, — I have been honored with your favor by Mr. Joy, to whom I will readily render every service in my power; and I am also to thank you for the valuable books you took the trouble to collect for me. In the cause of my black brethren I feel myself warmly interested, and most decidedly side, so far as respects them, against the white part of mankind. Whatever be the complexion of the enslaved, it does not, in

my opinion, alter the complexion of the crime which the enslaver commits, a crime much blacker than any African face. It is to me a matter of great anxiety and concern, to find that this trade is sometimes perpetrated under the flag of liberty, our dear and noble stripes, to which virtue and glory have been constant standard-bearers. Inclosed, I beg leave to send a letter to Mr. Sharp with acknowledgments for his attention.

No event of great importance in Paris. Cardinal de Rohan's affair has produced many memoirs; which of the different tales is the right one, I do not pretend to say. The cardinal has been either a rogue or a fool; the latter seems the most probable. All the farms have been renewed with an augmentation of revenue, that of tobacco excepted, and on this, as well as on every other point, I stand a warm opposer to the principles of the farm. On this side of the channel, when good deeds fail, you will, at least, find good intentions; in England, neither. While policy is the result of passion, not of reason, every sensible calculation is at an end. And it is still a matter of doubt with me, however strange it appears, if they will give up the posts, or let us have the pleasure to walk into those formidable works on our Saratoga tune of Yankee doodle.

With every sentiment, &c.

LAFAYETTE.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 22 February, 1786.

SIR, — On Monday evening another conference was held with the Tripolitan ambassador, attended with his interpreter, Benamor, who is a decent man, and very ready in the English as well as Arabic and Italian. The foreign ministers here say, it is the custom of all the ambassadors from Barbary to be much connected with Jews, to whom they are commonly recommended. It may be supposed the Jews have interested motives, and, therefore, although their interference cannot be avoided, they ought to be objects of jealousy. Benamor soon betrayed proofs enough that he had no aversion to the ambassador's obtaining large terms.

The ambassador, who is known to many of the foreign ministers here, is universally well spoken of.

When he began to explain himself concerning his demands, he said, "they would be different, according to the duration of the treaty; if that were perpetual, they would be greater; if for a term of years, less. His advice was, that it should be perpetual. Once signed by the bashaw, dey, and other officers, it would be indissoluble, and binding forever upon all their successors. But, if a temporary treaty were made, it might be difficult and expensive to revive it; for a perpetual treaty, such as they had now with Spain, a sum of thirty thousand guineas must be paid upon the delivery of the articles signed by the dey and other officers. If it were agreed to, he would send his secretary by land to Marseilles, and from thence by water to Tripoli, who should bring it back by the same route, signed by the dey, &c. He had proposed so small a sum in consideration of the circumstances, but declared it was not half of what had been lately paid them by Spain. If we chose to treat upon a different plan, he would make a treaty perpetual, upon the payment of twelve thousand five hundred guineas for the first year, and three thousand guineas annually, until the thirty thousand guineas were paid." It was observed that these were large sums, and vastly beyond expectation. But his Excellency answered, that they never made a treaty for less. Upon the arrival of a prize, the dey and the other officers were entitled by law to large shares, by which they might make greater profits than these sums amounted to, and they never would give up this advantage for less.

He was told, that, although there was a full power to treat, the American ministers were limited to a much smaller sum; so that it would be impossible to do any thing until we could write to congress and know their pleasure. Colonel Smith was present at this, as he had been at the last conference, and agreed to go to Paris to communicate all to Mr. Jefferson, and persuade him to come here, that we may join in further conferences, and transmit the result to congress. The ambassador believed that Tunis and Morocco would treat upon the same terms, but would not answer for Algiers; they would demand more. When Mr. Jefferson arrives, we shall insist upon knowing the ultimatum, and transmit it to congress.

Congress will perceive that one hundred and twenty thousand guineas will be indispensable to conclude with the four

powers at this rate, besides a present to the ambassadors and other incidental charges; besides this, a present of five hundred guineas is made upon the arrival of a consul in each State. No man wishes more fervently that the expense could be less; but the fact cannot be altered; and the truth ought not to be concealed.

It may be reasonably concluded that this great affair cannot be finished for much less than two hundred thousand pounds sterling. There is no place in Europe or America where congress can obtain such a sum but in Holland; perhaps a loan for two millions of guilders might be filled in Amsterdam upon the terms of the last. If it is not done, this war will cost us more millions of sterling money in a short time, besides the miserable depression of the reputation of the United States, the cruel embarrassment of all our commerce, and the intolerable burthen of insurance, added to the cries of our countrymen in captivity.

The probable success of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Lamb need not be pointed out.

If a perpetual peace were made with these States, the character of the United States would instantly rise all over the world. Our commerce, navigation, and fisheries would extend into the Mediterranean, to Spain and Portugal, France and England. The additional profits would richly repay the interest, and our credit would be adequate to all our wants.

Colonel Smith is gone to Paris; he departed yesterday. By the sixth article of the confederation "No State, without the consent of the United States in congress assembled, shall send any embassy to, or receive any embassy from, or enter into any conference, agreement, alliance, or treaty with any king, prince, or state." All the States are so deeply interested in this case, that surely no separate State can have occasion to move for the consent of congress upon this occasion; but if, unexpectedly, congress should not agree to treat, there are several States in the Union so deeply interested in navigation that it would richly compensate each of them to go to the whole extent of two hundred thousand pounds to obtain peace. Nevertheless, a single State might obtain peace and security for its ships at a much cheaper rate.

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 26 February, 1786.

Sir, — The envoy from Portugal has received from his Court an answer to his despatches relative to the treaty with the United States; and the inclosed extract from it, which has been delayed some time by the sickness of the Chevalier de Freire, the Portuguese secretary of legation, that minister did me the honor to deliver to me two days ago, with his request that it might be transmitted to congress. At the same time, he delivered me the inclosed state of the trade between the United States and Portugal the last year. When Mr. Jefferson arrives, we shall endeavor to finish this business.

The proposition of sending and receiving a minister has been many times made before. Congress will, no doubt, answer this which is now made, formally and officially. The regard which is due from one sovereign to another, and, indeed, common decency, seems to require it. To refuse it, would be thought surprising; indeed, according to all the rules of politeness between nations and sovereigns, it ought to be left at the option of her most faithful Majesty to send what grade of public minister she shall judge proper; and assurances should be given of the most amicable disposition of congress to receive him with all the respect due to his sovereign, and to send a minister to her Majesty of equal character.

The United States are, at this moment, suffering severely for want of an equitable adjustment of their affairs with the powers of Europe and Africa, which can never be accomplished, but by conforming to the usages established in the world. If the United States would come to the resolution to prohibit all foreign vessels from coming to their ports, and confine all exports and imports to their own ships and seamen, they would do, for any thing that I know, the wisest thing which human prudence could dictate; but then the consequence would be obvious. They must give up the most of their commerce, and live by their agriculture. In this case, they might recall their ministers, and send no more.

On the other hand, if the United States would adopt the principle of the French economists, and allow the ships and

merchants of all nations equal privileges with their own citizens, they need not give themselves any further trouble about treaties or ambassadors. The consequence, nevertheless, would be the sudden annihilation of all their manufactures and navigation. We should have the most luxurious set of farmers that ever existed, and should not be able to defend our sea-coast against the insults of a pirate.

As these are two extremes that we know Americans will never consent to, we must vindicate our own manufactures and navigation by legislation at home and negotiation abroad; and, therefore, the prejudices against exchanges of public ministers will be found some of the most pernicious that ever have arisen among American citizens. Laws at home must be made in conformity to the state of affairs abroad, which can never be known to congress but by ambassadors.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 27 February, 1786.

Sir, — At the last conferences, as they call here what is understood in Paris by ambassador's days, the Marquis of Carmarthen was pleased to make an apology for not having yet answered the memorial requiring the evacuation of the posts. "It would sound oddly to say that he had delayed his answer to prevent delays; but it was true. He had drawn up his answer; but, as he was obliged to say something concerning the old debts, he had been obliged to wait for a little further information, that he might state, in one view, all the acts of the assemblies which had interposed impediments." As this is some kind of respect to the memorial, it ought to be communicated to congress, as, no doubt, it was intended and expected that it should be.

The public prints will inform you that the Newfoundland bill and the American intercourse bill are revived. It would be sufficient to convince every American what the system is, to say that Mr. Jenkinson was the member of administration and the House of Commons, selected to conduct this business. Comparing his well known character with what he said, you

will believe that the same men and the same principles, which have governed this nation in their conduct towards America these twenty years, prevail to this hour, as far as the circumstances will admit; and that Mr. Pitt is either a convert to their sentiments, or is only an ostensible minister.

It remains with the States to determine what measures they will take to discourage a commerce the most impoverishing and ruinous that can be imagined, to promote a more beneficial intercourse with the rest of Europe, and to support their own manufactures and navigation; for on such measures alone can they have any dependence in future.

With sincere esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO WILLIAM WHITE.

London, 28 February, 1786.

Sir, — Your favor of the 26th of November,[1] by Mr. Peters, I had not the honor to receive till a few days ago. I am much obliged to you for this mark of your confidence, and for the pamphlets and papers inclosed, which I had yesterday an opportunity of communicating to the Archbishop of Canterbury, when his Grace did me the honor of a visit, to deliver me the inclosed letter, with the desire of the bishops that I would transmit it to the committee.

I have not understood that there will be any political objections against the measure you desire. If any such should arise, as an American citizen, though not an Episcopalian, I can very consistently endeavor to remove it, because I do not believe that the benevolence of the Father of all is confined by our lines of distinction or differences of opinion; and because I think that, when we can enlarge our minds to allow each other an entire liberty in religious matters, the human race will be more happy and respectable in this and the future stage of their existence. It would be inconsistent with the American character, and with the principles of our constitutions, to raise political objections against the consecration of bishops, as it is merely a religious ceremony. The States will, no doubt, take care

[1] See p. 349.

that no temporal powers inconsistent with their civil politics shall be annexed to the character. This, however, is their affair.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO MATTHEW ROBINSON.[1]

London, 2 March, 1786.

SIR, — You have obliged me very much by your kind letter of 27th February. The Americans are indeed Englishmen, and will continue such, in language and sentiments and manners, whether they are allowed to be friends, or compelled to be enemies, of those other Englishmen who inhabit these islands, Great Britain, and Ireland. The privileges of purchasing, inheriting, exercising trades, voting or being chosen into offices of all kinds, if declared by act of parliament, would, no doubt, be considered in a friendly light, but, give me leave to say, would have no material effect, while embarrassments are either studiously or ignorantly thrown in the way of commerce. The United States are willing to throw wide open every port in their dominions to British ships and merchants and merchandizes, and I am ready, in their behalf, to pledge their faith in a treaty to this effect, upon the reciprocal stipulation of this nation that her ports shall be equally open to our ships, merchants, and produce. But the United States must repel monopolies by monopolies, and answer prohibitions by prohibitions. I may be uninformed respecting the East Indies; but, although the East India Company have, by their charter and act of parliament, an exclusive privilege of importing East India goods into the port of London only, I do not know that Americans, or any other foreign nation, are prohibited to trade with the British factories and settlements in Asia. This, nevertheless, is not a point with us. The ministry might except the charter of the rights of the East India Company. But the American commerce is a system, and a free intercourse between the

[1] This gentleman, the brother of the more celebrated Mrs. Elizabeth Montague, and the author of one or two pamphlets relating to the American war, had entered into correspondence with Mr. Adams through the agency of Dr. Price.

United States and Canada, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the West India Islands, as well as a market for their oil and fins and spermaceti candles, and ready-built ships, is so essential to it, that, if one nation will not, another must concede it. If England will not, Germany, Holland, France, &c. will. This commerce is even more necessary to your colonies, than it is to us; and the present policy is sowing the seeds of disquiet and discontent in the minds of your colonies, that will alienate them all, if persisted in. This uneasiness has already broken out in Barbadoes into violence, which occasioned the troops to fire upon the people, by which a number were killed, as the public prints inform us; and it will increase from day to day. The 5th of March, 1770, ought to be an eternal warning to this nation. On that night the foundation of American independence was laid.

I have the honor to agree perfectly with you in opinion, that England might receive more benefit from a liberal commerce with America, than she would if we had remained under her government; and I may be permitted to say that, having been, from 1774 to this day, either in congress, or in her service abroad, I have been fully acquainted with every step and motive of her conduct towards the powers of Europe; and it has been her constant rule to concede no preferences to France, or any other nation, that she might be at liberty to settle a commercial plan with England upon the fairest terms. Little did she expect or foresee that England would refuse the favors intended her. I must say the ministry appear to have no idea of the principles on which congress have acted. The consequence must be that the trade of America must leave this country and go to her rivals. The ministry, and the nation too, seem to consider the United States as a rival, and we know very well what in English lexicography is the meaning of the word *rival*. It is an enemy, to be beat down by every means. But it may be depended on that, if the United States are treated in this manner, they will make common cause with the other rivals of British commerce, who, at this day, are almost as numerous as the nations of Europe.

It is the earnest desire of the United States to live in friendship with this country, and to have no other contention but in reciprocal good offices. It seems to be your opinion that the

people of England have the same disposition. I beg you to explain yourself on this head, as I must confess I have not met with any symptoms of it, excepting in a few, a very few individuals; much fewer than I expected when I first arrived here. To what purpose is the universal industry to represent the commerce of the United States as of no importance? Where would have been the stocks, the exchange, and the revenue of this country, without it? There has been a constant stream of produce, cash, and bills flowing into this country, since the peace, from the United States. Remittances, to an immense amount, have been made; and even a large sum through France, Spain, Portugal, and Holland, which has contributed in no small degree to turn the balance of exchange so much in your favor, as well as to throw a surplus into the exchequer, and raise the stocks; and these remittances might have been nearly doubled, if common sense had dictated to the British politicians to receive from us, in payment, such things as we have.

The Americans are, at this day, a great people, and are not to be trifled with. Their numbers have increased fifty per cent. since 1774. A people that can multiply at this rate, amidst all the calamities of such a war of eight years, will, in twenty years more, be too respectable to want friends. They might sell their friendship, at this time, at a very high price to others, however lightly it may be esteemed here.

I have the misfortune to differ widely from your opinion in the address, that the "independence of America happened a century too soon." It would be easy to show that it happened at the best point of time. There is no imaginable period, past or future, at which it could have been brought into event to so much advantage for America. But this would lead me too far. The information you may have received concerning the confusions, distresses, &c. of the United States, are of a piece with those misrepresentations which have constantly misguided this nation for five and twenty years. The inconveniences now felt are confined to those who have been deceived into an excess of trade with this country, by expectations, which have been disappointed, that the usual remittances would be received; and they have arisen from a desire to live and trade in friendship with England. The country in general is in a thriving and

flourishing condition, and this country alone will finally be the sufferer by the impediments they have thrown in the way of their own interest.

You will perceive, sir, that I have written too freely and too largely. In my situation, it may be imprudent. But the subject is of great importance, and deserves your closest attention. You will greatly oblige me by communicating your sentiments with equal frankness. With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

THE TREASURY BOARD TO JOHN ADAMS.

Board of Treasury, 7 March, 1786.

Sir, — We do ourselves the honor of transmitting to you the resolves of congress of the 15th day of February last, from which you will observe the embarrassments under which the United States labor to comply with their foreign engagements, through the want of exertions in the several States to pay in their quotas of the annual requisitions. The present state of the treasury is, in consequence, so reduced, that we are apprehensive it may not, perhaps, be in our power to remit to the commissioners of the Dutch loans in Europe sufficient funds, in season to discharge the whole interest which will become due on the Dutch loans on the first day of June next, if the sum of eighty thousand dollars, which has been appropriated by the resolves of congress of the 15th February, 1785, for the purpose of forming treaties with the Barbary powers, should be drawn out of the hands of the Dutch commissioners before that day. We are using our endeavors to make arrangements, so that our remittances may arrive in season; but, as they may be prevented by some casualty from coming to hand by the 1st of next June, it becomes our duty to request the favor of you to avoid, if it possibly can be done, drawing out of the hands of the Dutch commissioners the moneys appropriated for the purpose of making treaties with the Barbary powers, before the 1st of June next; and to direct it, if our remittances should not arrive in season, to be appropriated to the payment of the June interest.

You may rest assured, sir, that every exertion will be made by this Board, that the remittances may arrive in season, without placing any dependence on this resource; and that, at all

events, the sum of seventy thousand dollars shall be remitted to the Dutch commissioners on or before the first day of August next, to wait your orders.

To your Excellency, who knows so well the importance of preserving the public faith with foreign nations, and particularly with the Dutch money-lenders, it would be unnecessary to use any arguments to show the propriety of our application on this subject. We are satisfied that, if the state of the negotiations will possibly admit of it, you will permit this money to remain for the purposes we have mentioned.

On examining the abstract of the distribution of the obligations on the five millions loan to the 30th September last, we find that there remained undistributed, on that day, one hundred and thirty-eight obligations, equal to 130,000 florins. It is much to be wished that this loan may be completed with all the despatch possible. Without it, we have too much reason to fear we shall experience difficulties in remitting sufficient sums to Europe to pay the interest of the foreign loans, and the salaries of foreign ministers and agents, during the present year.

We have the honor to be, &c.

Samuel Osgood,
Walter Livingston,
Arthur Lee.

TO GRANVILLE SHARP.

Grosvenor Square, 8 March, 1786.

Sir, — I took the first opportunity to send your present of books to my friend the Marquis de Lafayette, and have, this morning, received the inclosed letter for you from that nobleman.

Let me avail myself of this opportunity of presenting my thanks for your obliging present of books to me. You have merited the respect and esteem of all men, amongst whom liberty and humanity are not disregarded, by your writings. The idea that captives in war are slaves, is the foundation of the misfortunes of the negroes. This principle is honored and admitted by all the powers of Europe who pay tribute to the states of Barbary. I expect that one part of Africa will avenge upon my fellow citizens the injury they do to another by pur-

chasing their captives. Yet I presume we shall be compelled to follow the base example of submission, and pay tribute or make presents, like the rest of Christians, to the mussulmen.

I wish you would take up the whole of this African system, and expose it altogether. Never, never will the slave trade be abolished, while Christian princes abase themselves before the piratical ensigns of Mahomet. With great esteem,

JOHN ADAMS.

THE TREASURY BOARD TO JOHN ADAMS.

Board of Treasury, 6 April, 1786.

SIR, — We do ourselves the honor of transmitting to you a duplicate of our letters to yourself and the commissioners of the Dutch loans of the 7th and 22d March last. The latter, together with one of this date, addressed to the same gentlemen, and inclosing a bill in their favor on Messrs. Wilhem and Jan Willink, of Amsterdam, we request the favor of you to forward by the first mail. Our letter to the commissioners is left open for your perusal, by which you will find that our directions to those gentlemen are to appropriate the proceeds of this bill for the purpose specified in the resolve of congress of the 14th February, 1785, relative to the proposed treaties with the Barbary powers, in case the moneys appropriated for this object have not been drawn out of their hands previous to the receipt of this bill. But, in case this event has taken place, our orders are to discount the bill, and to apply the proceeds for the payment of the Dutch interest, which becomes due on the first of June next. This remittance, added to the sum of thirty thousand dollars, which will be remitted to them for the same purpose by Messrs. Constable, Rucker & Co., in pursuance of a contract made with this Board, will very nearly complete the whole sum of interest which will become due on that day. The deficiency, we trust, will be made up by additional subscriptions to the loan; but, should this not be the case, we must request you not to draw the whole moneys appropriated for the Barbary treaties out of the hands of the commissioners (if not already done), relying on our taking measures to remit, with all possible despatch, to those gentlemen a further

sum of twenty thousand dollars, with directions to apply it, in the first instance, to make up any deficiency arising on this account on the sum of eighty thousand dollars appropriated for the purpose above mentioned.

We have the honor to be, &c.

SAMUEL OSGOOD,
WALTER LIVINGSTON.

TO JAMES BOWDOIN.

London, 9 May, 1786.

SIR, — Your Excellency's letter of the 12th January[1] I have had the honor to receive, and am much obliged to you for the information in it.

Your opinion of the policy of this country will be found, in the result of things, to be just; and your reasoning, in support of it, is so conclusive, and at the same time so obvious, that it is astonishing it has not its effect upon the cabinet. Every consideration has been repeatedly urged, to no effect; seamen, the navy, and power to strike an awful blow to their enemies at sea, on the first breaking out of a war, are the ideas that prevail over all others. Mr. Jenkinson, an old friend of the British empire, is still at his labors. He is about establishing a bounty upon fifteen ships to the southward, and upon two to double Cape Horn, for spermaceti whales. Americans are to take an oath that they mean to settle in England, before they are entitled to the bounty.

I have long since informed congress, that nothing is to be expected from this country but poverty, weakness, and ruin. If, after all, our people will carry on a ruinous trade, it is their own concern. But no man can do them a greater injury than by holding up to their view a hope that we shall receive any relief by taking off the duty on oil, or by admission to the West India Islands. They will infallibly be deceived, if they entertain any such expectations.

I have been circumstantially informed, from time to time and step by step, from Mr. Jefferson, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Mr. Barrett, of all the negotiations for exchanging our oil for the produce, manufactures, and sugars of France. The

[1] See p. 363.

great revolution in trade, which you mention, ought to be promoted by every friend of America, and it must take place. I have made use of all these considerations. But if an angel from heaven should declare to this nation, that our States will unite, retaliate, prohibit, or trade with France, they would not believe it. There is not one man in the nation who pretends to believe it; and, if he did, he would be treated with scorn.

Let me entreat you, sir, and every other citizen of the United States, to extinguish all hopes of relief to their trade from this country.

Peace with the Turks, comprehending, under this term, Constantinople, Tunis, Tripoli, Algiers, and Morocco, is essential to our navigation and commerce, and political consideration in Europe. Two or three hundred thousand guineas, and nothing less, will obtain it. It will be miserable policy and economy to lose two or three millions in trade, insurance, &c. &c., and still worse, to add two or three millions more in fitting out a navy to fight them, in order to save that sum in customary presents. We are now limited to a sum that will be worse than thrown away.

Intrigues of individuals are said to be on foot, to set South America free from Spain; and, not improbably, the pulse may be felt in the United States. But I hope the States will not only be prudent themselves, but oblige individuals to be so too. Portugal and Spain are bound, by a treaty of 1778, to support each other in such a case; and all the world will be in flames. We had better avoid the fury of them.

Three great objects agitate the cabinets of Europe in secret. The passage of the Dardanelles and navigation of the Danube, I consider as one. A free commerce with all the East Indies, is a second; and the independence of South America, is the third. They will all be pursued until they are obtained, as I fully believe. But, as all know the contest will be sharp, extensive, and long, all are afraid to begin. This is all confidential between you and me, and a few of our discreet friends. God bless our country; but I still tremble for its safety.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 16 May, 1786.

Dear Sir, — Last night I was honored with your letter of April 7th, and am happy to find that twelve States have granted to congress the impost. New York, I am persuaded, will not long withhold her assent, because that, in addition to all the other arguments in favor of the measure, she will have to consider that all the blame of consequences must now rest upon her; and she would find this, alone, a greater burden than the impost. This measure, alone, as soon as it is completed, will have a great effect, and instantly raise the United States in the consideration of Europe, and especially of England. Its beneficial effects will be soon felt in America, by producing a circulation of that property, the long stagnation of which has been a principal cause of the distress of the community. The States, jointly and severally, would find immediate benefits from establishing taxes to pay the whole interest of their debts, those of the confederation, as well as those of particular States; the interest of money would instantly be lowered, and capitals be employed in manufactures and commerce, that are now at usury. It is no paradox to say that every man would find himself the richer, the more taxes he pays; and this rule must hold good, until the taxes shall amount to a sum sufficient to discharge the interest due to every creditor in the community. The power to regulate the commerce of the whole, will not, probably, be long withheld from congress; and when that point shall be agreed to, you will begin to hear a cry in England for a treaty. Like Daniel Defoe's game cock among the horses feet, it will be, "Pray, gentlemen, don't let us tread upon one another."

You have, I hope, before now, Lord Carmarthen's answer of February 28th to my memorial of November 30th. I had determined in my own mind not "to demand a categorical answer without the further orders of congress," and it is a great satisfaction to find your opinion coincide. It is now with congress to deliberate what answer they should make to his Lordship; and, for my own part, I do not see what answer they can

give, until they know the sense of Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, and South Carolina.

With the highest regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

London, 18 May, 1786.

MY LORD, — I do myself the honor of transmitting to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, an act of the United States of America in congress assembled, the 13th of October, 1785, together with copies of sundry other papers, relative to the boundary line between the United States and his Majesty's late province of Nova Scotia, part of which is now called New Brunswick. It is still fresh in the recollection of every person who was concerned in the negotiation of the late peace, that Mitchell's map was made use of by the British and American plenipotentiaries, and the river St. Croix was marked out on that map, as there delineated, for the boundary; which circumstance alone, it is hoped, will be sufficient to determine all questions which may have been raised concerning so recent a transaction. In former controversies between the crowns of Great Britain and France, concerning the boundary between the late province of Massachusetts Bay and Nova Scotia, it has often been contended by the British ministers and commissioners that the river St. Croix was a river still further eastward than the easternmost of those three which fall into the bay of Passamaquoddy, but never once admitted to be a river more westerly. So that the plenipotentiaries at the peace, on both sides, had reason to presume that, when they fixed on the St. Croix, surveyed by Mitchell and laid down by him on his map, there never could afterwards arise any controversy concerning it. Yet it seems, my Lord, that a number of his Majesty's subjects have crossed over the river and settled in the territory of the United States, an encroachment in which they can not be supposed to be countenanced by his Majesty's government.

Difficulties of this kind, if early attended to, are easily adjusted; and I shall be ready, at all times, to enter into conferences with your Lordship, that every point may be discussed,

and all uneasiness prevented; but, while new maps are every day made, and old ones colored, according to an erroneous idea, a foundation may be laid for much future evil, both to nations and individuals. I am, my Lord, &c.

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 23 May, 1786.

Dear Sir, — I am honored with yours of the 11th,[1] with the inclosures from Mr. Lamb, Mr. Carmichael, and Mr. Barclay.

I am not surprised that Mr. Lamb has only discovered that our means are inadequate, without learning the sum that would be sufficient. Il faut marchander avec ces gens là. They must be beaten down as low as possible; but we shall find, at last, the terms very dear. The Algerines will never make peace with us until we have treaties finished with Constantinople, Tunis, Tripoli, and Morocco; they always stand out the longest. Mr. Barclay will have no better fortune, and I don't believe it worth while for him to wait a moment to discover what sum will do.

I think, with you, that it is best to desire Mr. Lamb immediately to return to congress, and Mr. Randal too. It is surprising that neither of them has given us more circumstantial information, and that Mr. Randal has not come on to Paris and London. I think you will do well to write him to come forward without loss of time, and am glad you sent copies of all the letters to Mr. Jay. I concur with you entirely in the propriety of your going on with the Comte de Merci in the negotiation, and in transmitting to congress the plan you may agree upon, that they may send a new commission, if they judge proper.

I have a letter from Mr. Randal, at Madrid, 4 May, but shall not answer it, as I wish you to write him, in behalf of both of us, to return immediately to Paris and London. I have a let-

[1] This letter, and indeed most of the others making Mr. Jefferson's part of the correspondence at this period, have been printed in the work edited by his grandson, T. J. Randolph. Those which are inserted in this collection are such as are not found there.

ter, too, from Isaac Stephens, at Algiers the 15th of April. He says the price is $6,000 for a master, $4,000 for a mate, and $1,500 for each sailor. The Dey will not abate a sixpence, he says, and will not have any thing to say about peace with America. He says the people, that is the sailors, I suppose, are carrying rocks and timber on their backs for nine miles out of the country, over sharp rocks and mountains; that he has an iron round his leg, &c. He begs that we would pay the money for their redemption, without sending to congress; but this is impossible.

Yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 25 May, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — I have not presented a formal memorial, in the name of our sovereign, concerning the negroes carried off contrary to the treaty, although it has been frequently and constantly insisted upon with the British ministry, for several reasons. One was, a desire to confine the first memorial to one point, the frontier posts, that the real motives and intentions of the cabinet might be the more distinctly laid open to congress. Another reason was, the frankness of ministers, to own, in conversation, that the negroes must be paid for, as a clear point. Another was, that time might be allowed to you, sir, to transmit me the whole amount and evidence of the claim. And lastly, that I might have the explicit instructions of congress to demand payment for the negroes in money, and especially at what prices they should be stated.

By the answer of Lord Carmarthen to the memorial of the 30th of November, congress will see that the detention of the posts is attempted to be justified by the laws of certain States impeding the course of law for the recovery of old debts, &c. Were another memorial to be now presented relative to the negroes, the same answer would undoubtedly be given, or, more probably, a reference only to that answer. It is my duty to be explicit with my country, and, therefore I hope it will not be taken amiss by any of my fellow citizens, when they are told that it is in vain to expect the evacuation of posts,

or payment for the negroes, a treaty of commerce, or restoration of prizes, payment of the Maryland or Rhode Island demand, compensation to the Boston merchants, or any other relief of any kind, until these laws are all repealed. Nor will the ministry ever agree to any explanation concerning the interest during the war, or payments by instalments. The old creditors have formed themselves into a society and have frequent meetings, send committees to Mr. Pitt and Lord Carmarthen, and, I am well informed, oppose even a treaty of commerce, upon this ground; and the ministers know them to be so numerous that they could raise a clamor, a consideration which has always had more weight at this Court and in parliament than the interest of America or the British empire.

What, then, is to be done? The States, it may be said, will not repeal their laws. If they do not, then let them give up all expectation from this Court and country, unless you can force them to do as you please by investing congress with full power to regulate trade.

I will run the hazard, sir, of all the clamor that can be raised against me by my friends, or by my enemies, if any such there are, and of all the consequences that can befall me, for writing my sentiments freely to congress on a subject of this importance. It will appear to all the world with an ill grace, if we complain of breaches of the treaty, when the British Court have it in their power to prove upon us breaches of the same treaty, of greater importance. My advice, then, if it is not impertinent to give it, is, that every law of every State which concerns either debts or royalists, which can be impartially construed contrary to the spirit of the treaty of peace, be immediately repealed, and the debtors left to settle with their creditors, or dispute the point of interest at law. I do not believe a jury would give the interest. I beg leave to suggest another thing; if congress are themselves clear that interest during the war was not part of that *bonâ fide* debt which was intended by the contracting parties, they may declare so by a resolution, or the legislatures of the separate States may declare so, and then the courts of justice and the juries will certainly give no interest during the war; but, even in this case, those States which have few debts, and have made no laws against the recovery of them, will think it hard that they should be subjected to dangers by

the conduct of such as have many, and have made laws inconsistent with the treaty, both respecting debts and tories. You will give me leave, sir, to suggest another idea; suppose the States should venture to do themselves justice; for example, suppose Maryland should undertake to pay herself for her bank stock and negroes carried off after the treaty, by accepting security for it from her own citizens, who are debtors to British subjects, and giving discharges to those debtors, or engaging to stand between them and the claims of the creditor; suppose the Carolinas, Virginia, and all the other States which had negroes carried off after the peace, should do the same; suppose Massachusetts should make up the losses of the inhabitants of Boston in goods carried off by General Howe, in the same way, at least those of them who were promised compensation by General Howe, for these are undoubtedly creditors of the British government; suppose, further, that each State should undertake, in the same way, to compensate the owners of vessels taken after the commencement of the armistice.

I throw out these hints as possibilities and speculations only, sensible that they might open a door to much altercation; but I will not fail to add, that I think it would be much sounder policy and nobler spirit to repeal at once every law of every State which is in the smallest degree inconsistent with the treaty respecting either debts or tories, and am well persuaded that no inconvenience would be felt from it; neither law suits, nor bankruptcies, nor imprisonments, would be increased by it; on the contrary, the credit and commerce of all the States would be so increased, that the debtors themselves, in general, would find their burthens lighter.

With great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

P. S. Inclosed are two acts of parliament and the King's last proclamation. The other acts which affect America shall be sent as soon as they are passed, and I can obtain them.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 30 May, 1786.

Dear Sir, — In my letter of this day, I omitted to inform you that, according to what we had proposed, I have had a long consultation with the Count de Vergennes, on the expediency of a diplomatic mission to Constantinople. His information is that it will cost a great deal of money, as great presents are expected at that Court, and a great many claim them; and his opinion is, that we shall not buy a peace one penny the cheaper at Algiers. He says that these people do indeed acknowledge a kind of vassalage to the Porte, and avail themselves of it when there is any thing to be claimed, but regard it not at all when it subjects them to a duty; that money and fear are the two only agents at Algiers. He cited the example of Spain; which, though under treaty with the Porte, is yet obliged to buy a peace at Algiers at a most enormous price. This is the sum of his information. The Baron de Tott is gone to Flanders for the summer. I am, &c.

Thomas Jefferson.

TO JAMES BOWDOIN.

London, 2 June, 1786.

Sir, — Dr. Gordon yesterday called upon me with the letter which your Excellency did me the honor to write me on the 10th of April. I have long since transmitted to congress the answer of the Board of Admiralty to the representations relative to the conduct of Captain Stanhope, in which the letters of that officer are disapproved.

The representations of the encroachments on the territory of the United States have been laid before the British ministry; but I presume they will, like many others, be little attended to. In short, sir, I must be so free as to say to you, that, by every thing I have seen and heard in this country, nothing of any material consequence will ever be done, while there remains in force a law of any one State impeding the recovery of *bonâ fide* debts contracted before the 30th of November, 1782, or incon-

sistent with the article of the treaty of peace respecting the tories.

It is very true that Mitchell's map governed the American and British plenipotentiaries in settling the line between the two nations. There is upon that map but one river which is marked with the name of St. Croix, and that was the object undoubtedly fixed upon. There is no river upon that map, that I remember, marked with the name of Schoodack or Megacadava. Next to the great river St. Johns, proceeding westward on that map, is a little river inscribed Mechior; next to that, is another stream running between the words Carriage harbor; next to that we come to a larger river, running from Kousaki lake into the bay Passamaquoddy, and inscribed with the name of river St. Croix; next to that, still proceeding westward, is Passamaquoddy river. But that inscribed, river St. Croix, running from the sea, or what I call Passamaquoddy bay, up to the Kousaki lake, was marked with the pencil for the boundary. It is impossible for me to say more. If the true St. Croix cannot be discovered by these marks, there is no remedy but by an ulterior agreement, or the law of the strongest. It is astonishing that, to this hour, no man can produce a map of all the bays, harbors, islands, and rivers in that neighborhood, that can be depended on. If the ministry will meet me in a fair discussion of the question, or in any of the methods pointed out to me by my superiors for a settlement, I shall be glad. They have it under consideration, and, as soon as they give me an answer, I shall transmit it to congress; but, as they do not love pains and trouble so well as you and I do, I fear they will leave it all to Sir Guy Carleton, who is no more of a friend to the United States than any other British knight, and will be guided by the royalists more than by maps or surveys. Why any of my countrymen should choose to give to these royalists so much importance as they do, I know not. We should recollect that all parties in this country are pledged to support them, and party faith is a stronger tie than national faith.

The paper relative to Alexander Gross of Truro, I must transmit to Mr. Jefferson, it being in his department. I may, nevertheless, previously communicate it to the Comte d'Adhemar, and request his friendly offices in the matter. Yours,

John Adams.

TO COUNT D'ADHEMAR.

London, 3 June, 1786.

Sir, — I do myself the honor to inclose to your Excellency an extract of a letter I received yesterday from his Excellency James Bowdoin, Governor of Massachusetts, together with the documents under the seal of the State, therein referred to.

As the ransoming captain is an Englishman, he no doubt applauds himself for the address with which he persuaded a simple American to go as a hostage upon promises, which, as he never has given himself any concern about, he probably never intended to fulfil. At present, as Gross can have no remedy against him, he has no compassion for Gross, and would probably with great indifference suffer him to pass all his days in prison, and as the relations of the hostage are poor and unable to pay the ransom, he must remain in prison till he perishes, unless the government or the persons interested will consent to his liberation.

I beg leave to intercede with your Excellency, in behalf of my unfortunate countryman, that his case may be transmitted to your Court, to the end that he may be set at liberty, either by the humanity of the persons interested, or by the authority of government, upon whom the expense of his maintenance in prison for life will otherwise fall. Yours,

John Adams.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 6 June, 1786.

Dear Sir, — Yesterday I received your favor of 30th May, with its inclosures. You have, since that day, no doubt received my answer to yours of the 11th, in which I agreed perfectly with you in the propriety of sending Mr. Lamb to congress without loss of time. I am content to send Mr. Randal with him, but had rather he should come to you first, and then to me, and embark in London after we shall have had opportunity, from his conversation, to learn as much as we can.

The Comte de Vergennes is undoubtedly right in his judgment that avarice and fear are the only agents at Algiers, and

that we shall not have peace with them the cheaper for having a treaty with the Sublime Porte. But is he certain we can ever, at any price, have peace with Algiers, unless we have it previously with Constantinople? And do not the Turks from Constantinople send rovers into the Mediterranean? And would not even treaties of peace with Tunis, Tripoli, Algiers, and Morocco, be ineffectual for the security of our Mediterranean trade, without a peace with the Porte? The Porte is at present the theatre of the politics of Europe, and commercial information might be obtained there.

The first question is, what will it cost us to make peace with all five of them. Set it, if you will, at five hundred thousand pounds sterling, though I doubt not it might be done for three, or perhaps for two. The second question is, what damage shall we suffer if we do not treat. Compute six or eight per cent. insurance upon all your exports and imports; compute the total loss of all the Mediterranean and Levant trade; compute the loss of one half your trade to Portugal and Spain. The third question is, what will it cost to fight them. I answer at least half a million a year, without protecting your trade; and when you leave off fighting, you must pay as much money as it would cost you now for peace. The interest of half a million sterling is, even at six per cent., 30,000 guineas a year. For an annual interest of £30,000 sterling, then, and perhaps for £15,000 or £10,000, we can have peace, when a war would sink us annually ten times as much.

But, for God's sake, don't let us amuse our countrymen with any further projects of sounding. We know all about it, as much as ever we can know, until we have the money to offer. We know if we send an ambassador to Constantinople, he must give presents. How much, the Comte de Vergennes can tell you better than any man in Europe.

We are fundamentally wrong. The first thing to be done is for congress to have a revenue. Taxes, duties, must be laid on by congress or the assemblies, and appropriated to the payment of interest. The moment this is done, we may borrow a sum adequate to all our necessities; if it is not done, in my opinion, you and I, as well as every other servant of the United States in Europe, ought to go home, give up all points, and let all our exports and imports be done in European bottoms. My indig-

nation is roused beyond all patience to see the people in all the United States in a torpor, and see them a prey, to every robber, pirate, and cheat in Europe. Jews and Judaizing Christians are now scheming to buy up all our continental notes at two or three shillings in the pound, in order to oblige us to pay them at twenty shillings. This will be richer plunder than that of Algerines, or Lloyd's coffee-house. I remain, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 16 June, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — Two days ago I was honored with your letter of the 4th of May, in which another of the 1st of the same month is referred to, and as I hear there is a passenger expected from the packet, I hope to receive it from him when he arrives in town.

Lord Carmarthen told me, yesterday, that he had letters from Mr. Anstey, mentioning his civil reception. His Lordship said, too, that a minister plenipotentiary would certainly be sent to congress; that it was not from any coldness or want of respect to the United States that it had not been already done, but merely from the difficulty of finding a proper person; that he had received many applications, but they had been generally from persons who, he was sure, would not be agreeable in America; and, in some instances, from persons more suitable for a place in the customs than in the *corps diplomatique*.

A long conversation ensued upon the subject of the posts, debts, &c., little of which being new is worth repeating. The policy of giving up the interest during the war, and of agreeing to a plan of payment by instalments, was again insisted on, from various considerations, particularly from the evident injustice of demanding interest for that period. It was argued that the claim of interest, in most cases, was grounded upon custom and the mutual understanding of the parties; but that it never had been the custom, nor had it ever been understood or foreseen, that an act of parliament should be passed, casting the American debtor out of the protection of the crown, cutting

off all correspondence, and rendering all intercourse criminal, for that was the result and the legal construction during the whole war. Here his Lordship fully agreed with me, and even outwent me in saying that it was very true that, by construction of the law of this land, it was high treason in a creditor in Great Britain to receive a remittance from his debtor in America during the war. His Lordship added some slight expressions concerning the interest, and wished that the courts were open for recovering the principal. We might leave the interest for an after consideration. In short, they waited only for some appearance of a disposition. The answer to my memorial of 30th November contained their true intentions. They sincerely meant to fulfil every engagement, whenever they saw a disposition on our part.

These expressions, you see, are somewhat oracular; but they conveyed so much meaning to me, that I will no longer hesitate to recommend to congress to take up this matter and decide it at once. It would be going too far to point out the mode, but it may be suggested to require of all the States, who have made laws irreconcilable to the treaty, immediately to repeal them, declaring, at the same time, that interest upon book debts and simple contracts, during the war, cannot be considered as any part of the *bonâ fide* debts intended in the treaty. As to specialties, there may be, in some cases, more difficulty. Yet I do not see but the same reasoning is applicable to all. The legal contract was dissolved by throwing us out of the protection of the crown, and our subsequent assumption of independence, and had no existence until renewed by treaty. Private honor and conscience are out of this question. Those who think themselves bound by these ties, will do as they please. But I believe, under all the circumstances, few persons, even of the most delicate sentiments, will be scrupulous. If such a declaration should be made by congress, candor will require that it should extend to both sides, to the British and refugee debtor, to American creditors, as well as *vice versâ*.

If congress should choose to avoid involving themselves in such a declaration, it would not be proper for individual States to do it; and in this case, I humbly conceive the laws ought to be repealed, and the question left to judges and juries, who,

upon the strictest construction of law, equity, and the treaty, may, in my opinion, in most cases, if not in all, deny the interest during the war to the creditor. In some of these ways relief must be had, or in none, for the ministry here will never intermeddle in the business.

If any one should ask, what was the intention of the contracting parties at the treaty, the answer must be, the treaty itself must determine, and any one who reads it may judge as well as one of the plenipotentiaries. The word "heretofore" was not used in preference to the words "before the war," with any view to the interest, but to comprehend debts which had been contracted during the war. The intention was, no doubt, that whatever judges and juries should find to be a debt, should be recovered; and I believe that any man, acting in the character of either, will find it difficult to say, upon his oath, that interest during the war is *bonâ fide* due. Did any debtor, foreseeing the war, contract a debt, and pledge his faith to pay interest during the continuance of it? Let this be proved, and a judge or juror would compel payment. But probably there is not one such case. The war may be considered as one of those accidents *bonâ fide* not expected or foreseen, against which equity will always give relief.

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

John Adams.

DAVID GRIFFITH TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 26 June, 1786.

Sir, — The general convention of the Protestant Episcopal church acknowledge themselves greatly obliged to your Excellency, for your kind attention to their religious concerns, in forwarding their endeavors to obtain consecration for bishops, and such a succession in the orders of her ministry as is most conformable to their principles and agreeable to their wishes.

Having instructions from the convention to transmit to your Excellency their vote of thanks, I do myself the honor now to inclose it.

With the greatest respect for your character, both private and public, I have the honor to be, &c.

David Griffith, *President.*

(*Inclosed.*)

24 June, 1786.

In Convention. Resolved, That the thanks of this convention be given to his Excellency John Adams, Esquire, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Great Britain, for his kind attention to the concerns of this church; and that the President be desired to transmit the same.

Extract from the minutes.

Francis Hopkinson, *Secretary.*

WILLIAM WHITE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 28 June, 1786.

Sir, — I had the honor and satisfaction of receiving your Excellency's letter dated 28 February, 1786;[1] and while the church to which I belong is emboldened, by your past condescension, to solicit your further attention to her concerns, I take the liberty to inclose you a production, which can have no importance but what it may derive from the weighty business of the body before whom it was delivered.

I cannot conclude without expressing my most hearty concurrence in the sentiments of your letter, with my wishes that they may always adorn those characters with whom the honor and happiness of our country shall be entrusted.

With the most perfect respect and esteem, &c.

William White.

D. GRIFFITH AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 28 June, 1786.

Sir, — The condescension your Excellency has shown, in delivering to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury a copy of a former address of the convention of the Protestant Episcopal church, and in transmitting the answer to it, added to your great candor and liberality in so stating the laws and constitutions of the United States on the subject of it, as will be forever remembered with gratitude by the members of our church, and

[1] See p. 382.

by all friends of religious freedom, hath emboldened us, as a committee of a succeeding convention, to request the like attention of your Excellency to their address to the right reverend bench; a copy of which we do ourselves the honor to inclose.

The Rev. Mr. Hultgien, a native and subject of Sweden, who is the bearer of this letter, hath taken the charge of the books and other communications referred to in the address, and will provide for their being delivered, with the assistance and under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Murray, formerly a clergyman in the State of Pennsylvania, whose past endeavors to forward our views have induced us to ask of him this instance of attention.

With a deep sense of your Excellency's great goodness, we have the honor to subscribe ourselves,

David Griffith,
William Smith,
William White,
Francis Hopkinson,
Samuel Powel.

TO JOHN LAMB.

London, 29 June, 1786.

Sir, — The importance of peace with the Algerines and the other inhabitants of the coast of Barbary, to the United States, renders it necessary that every information which can be obtained should be laid before congress; and, as the demands for the redemption of captives, as well as the amount of customary presents, are so much more considerable than seem to have been expected in America, it appears to us necessary that you should return, without loss of time, to New York, there to give an account to congress of all the particulars which have come to your knowledge, as well as of your own proceedings, and of the moneys which have been paid on account of the United States in consequence of your drafts upon their ministers in London.

From congress, when you arrive there, you will receive orders for your future government; and, in the mean time, we have no further occasion for your services in Europe. If you know of

a certain passage immediately from any port in Spain, we advise you to avail yourself of it; if not, we think it most advisable for you to come to Paris, and from thence, after having consulted with Mr. Jefferson, to repair to Lorient and embark for New York in the first packet.

As the instructions we send to Mr. Randal are to come on to Paris in his way to America, unless he should choose to accompany you from some port in Spain, we desire you to furnish him with money for his expenses to Paris and London out of the cash already in your hands; and we recommend to him, as well as to you, all reasonable attention to economy.

We are, &c.

JOHN ADAMS,
T. JEFFERSON.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 3 July, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 23d June is come to hand, with a copy of Mr. Lamb's of 6th June from Aranjuez.

There is no intelligence from America of armies marching to take the posts from the English. The news was made, as I suppose, against the opening of the three per cents; and it had the intended effect, to beat down the stocks a little.

Although the posts are important, the war with the Turks is more so. I lay down a few simple propositions.

1. We may at this time have peace with them, in spite of all the intrigues of the English or others to prevent it, for a sum of money.

2. We never shall have peace, though France, Spain, England, and Holland should use all their influence in our favor, without a sum of money.

3. That neither the benevolence of France, or the malevolence of England, will be ever able materially to diminish or increase the sum.

4. The longer the negotiation is delayed, the larger will be the demand.

From these premises, I conclude it to be wisest for us to negotiate and pay the necessary sum without loss of time.

Now, I desire you, and our noble friend the Marquis, to give me your opinion of these four propositions. Which of them do you deny or doubt? If you admit them all, do you admit the conclusion? Perhaps you will say, fight them, though it should cost us a great sum to carry on the war, and although, at the end of it, we should have more money to pay as presents. If this is your sentiment, and you can persuade the southern States into it, I dare answer for it that all from Pennsylvania, inclusively northward, would not object. It would be a good occasion to begin a navy.

At present we are sacrificing a million annually, to save one gift of £200,000. This is not good economy. We might, at this hour, have two hundred ships in the Mediterranean, whose freights alone would be worth £200,000, besides the influence upon the price of our produce. Our farmers and planters will find the price of their articles sink very low indeed, if this peace is not made.

The policy of Christendom has made cowards of all their sailors before the standard of Mahomet. It would be heroical and glorious in us to restore courage to ours. I doubt not we could accomplish it, if we should set about it in earnest; but the difficulty of bringing our people to agree upon it, has ever discouraged me.

You have seen Mr. Randal before this, no doubt, if he has not fallen sick on the road.

This letter is intended to go by Mr. Fox.

The Chevalier de Pinto's courier unfortunately missed a packet, which delayed him, and consequently the treaty, a month. The queen his mistress, as I wrote you a few days since, has given orders to her squadron cruising in the Straits to protect all vessels belonging to the United States. This is noble, and deserves thanks. With great respect,

JOHN ADAMS.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 9 July, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote you last on the 23d of May. Your favor of that date did not come to hand till the 19th of June; in consequence of it I wrote the next day letters to Mr. Lamb

and Mr. Randal, copies of which I have now the honor to inclose you. In these, you will perceive, I had desired Mr. Randal, who was supposed to be at Madrid, to return immediately to Paris and London; and to Mr. Lamb, supposed at Alicant, I recommended the route of Marseilles and Paris, expecting that no direct passage could be had from Alicant to America, and meaning, on his arrival here, to advise him to proceed by the way of London, that you also might have an opportunity of deriving from him all the information he could give. On the 2d July Mr. Randal arrived here, and delivered me a letter from Mr. Lamb, dated May 20, of which I inclose you a copy, as well as of another of June 5, which had come to hand some time before; copies of these I have also sent to Mr. Jay. Yours of the 29th of June by Dr. Bancroft, and inclosing a draft of a joint letter to Mr. Lamb, came to hand on the 5th instant. I immediately signed and forwarded it, as it left him more at liberty as to his route than mine had done. Mr. Randal will deliver you the present, and supply the information heretofore received. I think, with you, that congress must begin by getting money. When they have this, it is a matter of calculation whether they will buy a peace, or force one, or do nothing.

I am also to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of June 6, 25, and 26. The case of Gross shall be attended to. I am not certain, however, whether my appearing in it may not do him harm, by giving the captors a hope that our government will redeem their citizen. I have, therefore, taken measures to find them out and sound them. If nothing can be done privately, I will endeavor to interest this government.

Have you no news yet of the treaty with Portugal? Does it hang with that court? My letters from New York, of the 11th of May, inform me that there were then eleven States present, and that they should ratify the Prussian treaty immediately. As the time for exchange of ratifications is drawing to a close, tell me what is to be done, and how this exchange is to be made. We may as well have this settled between us, before the arrival of the ratification, that no time may be lost after that. I learn, through the Maréchal de Castries, that he has information of New York's having ceded the impost in the form desired by congress, so as to close this business. Corrections in the acts

of Maryland, Pennsylvania, &c. will come of course. We have taken up again the affair of whale oil, that they may know in time in America what is to be done in it. I fear we shall not obtain any further abatement of duties; but the last abatement will be continued for three years. The whole duties payable here are nearly one hundred and two livres on the English ton, which is an atom more than four guineas, according to the present exchange.

The monopoly of the purchase of tobacco for this country, which had been obtained by Robert Morris, had thrown the commerce of that article into agonies. He had been able to reduce the price in America from 40*s.* to 22*s.* 6*d.* lawful, the hundred weight; and all other merchants, being deprived of that medium of remittance, the commerce between America and this country, so far as it depended on that article, which was very capitally too, was absolutely ceasing. An order has been issued obliging the farmers general to purchase, from such other merchants as shall offer, fifteen thousand hogsheads of tobacco, at thirty-four, thirty-six, and thirty-eight livres the hundred, according to the quality, and to grant to the sellers, in other respects, the same terms as they had granted to Robert Morris. As this agreement with Morris is the basis of this order, I send you some copies of it, which I will thank you to give to any American (not British) merchants in London who may be in that line. During the year this contract has subsisted, Virginia and Maryland have lost £400,000 by the reduction of the price of their tobacco.

I am meditating what step to take to provoke a letter from Mrs. Adams, from whom my files inform me I have not received one these hundred years. In the mean time, present my affectionate respects to her, and be assured of the friendship and esteem with which I have the honor to be, dear sir, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 30 July, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 6th of June, with the ratification of the treaty with Prussia. As the term limited is near expiring, I

shall go over to Holland, or send Colonel Smith, to make the exchange.

Mr. Penn, a member of the House of Commons, whose character is well known in America and in England as a steady friend to our country, will be the bearer of this, and will be able to acquaint you with the present disposition of this Court and nation; and I believe his information, although a British subject and senator, will not be materially different from mine.

I cannot but lament, from my inmost soul, that lust for paper money which appears in some parts of the United States; there will never be any uniform rule, if there is a sense of justice, nor any clear credit, public or private, nor any settled confidence in public men or measures, until paper money is done away.

It is a great satisfaction to me to learn that you have received, in my letter of the 4th March, the answer of this Court to the memorial respecting the posts. As that is a despatch of more importance than all others you have received from me, I shall be anxious to know your sentiments upon it. You will not expect me to answer Lord Carmarthen's letter, nor to take any further steps concerning it, until I shall receive the orders of congress.

I wish for the instructions of that august body concerning a requisition in their name for the negroes; whether I am to demand payment for them, at what prices, and for what number. With great regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 31 July, 1786.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the ratification of the Prussian treaty, and next Thursday shall set off for the Hague, in order to exchange it with the Baron de Thulemeier.

Your favor of the 11th instant I have received. There are great and weighty considerations urged in it in favor of arming against the Algerines, and, I confess, if our States could be brought to agree in the measure, I should be very willing to resolve upon external war with vigor, and protect our trade and people. The resolution to fight them would raise the spirits

and courage of our countrymen immediately, and we might obtain the glory of finally breaking up these nests of banditti. But congress will never, or at least not for years, take any such resolution, and in the mean time our trade and honor suffers beyond calculation. We ought not to fight them at all, unless we determine to fight them forever.

This thought, I fear, is too rugged for our people to bear. To fight them at the expense of millions, and make peace, after all, by giving more money and larger presents than would now procure perpetual peace, seems not to be economical. Did Monsieur de Massac carry his point without making the presents? Has not France made presents ever since? Did any nation ever make peace with any one Barbary state without making the presents? Is there an example of it? I believe not, and fancy you will find that even Massac himself made the presents.

I agree in opinion of the wisdom and necessity of a navy for other uses, but am apprehensive it will make bad worse with the Algerines. I will go all lengths with you in promoting a navy, whether to be applied to the Algerines or not. But I think, at the same time, we should treat. Your letter, however, has made me easier upon this point. Nevertheless, to humble the Algerines, I think you have undercalculated the force necessary. They have now fifty gun-boats, which, being small objects against great ships, are very formidable.[1] None of these existed in the time of Monsieur Massac. The harbor of Algiers, too, is fortified all round, which it was not in M. Massac's time, which renders it more difficult and dangerous to attempt a blockade. I know not what dependence is to be put upon Portugal and Naples, in case of a war with the barbarians; perhaps they might assist us in some degree. Blocking Algiers would not obtain peace with Morocco; so that our commerce would still be exposed.

After all, though I am glad we have exchanged a letter on

[1] Mr. Tucker, in his Life of Jefferson, has sufficiently contrasted the opinions expressed in this letter, and in that to which it is in answer, with the positions respectively taken by the parties at a later period. But he does not show that the argument of Mr. Adams is one of expediency, drawn solely from the condition of the country at the moment, and in no way militates with his later action. Mr. Jefferson's letter is one of the best he ever wrote. It is printed in Mr. Randolph's collection of his writings. Vol. ii. p. 37.

the subject, I perceive that neither force nor money will be applied. Our States are so backward, that they will do nothing for some years. If they get money enough to discharge the demands upon them in Europe already incurred, I shall be agreeably disappointed. A disposition seems rather to prevail among our citizens to give up all ideas of navigation and naval power, and lay themselves consequently at the mercy of foreigners, even for the prices of their produce. It is their concern, and we must submit; for your plan of fighting will no more be adopted, than mine of treating. This is more humiliating to me than giving the presents would be. I have a letter from Mr. Jay of 7th July, by packet, containing nothing but an acknowledgment of our letter of 25th April. New Hampshire and Rhode Island have suspended their navigation acts, and Massachusetts, now left alone, will suspend theirs. So that all will be left to the convention, whose system, if they form one, will not be completed, adopted, and begin to operate, under several years. Congress have received the answer, which you saw, to my memorial of 30th November; and Mr. Ramsay writes me he is not distressed at it, because it will produce a repeal of all the laws against recovering private debts.

I am, &c.

John Adams.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 27 August, 1786.

Dear Sir, — Your favor of July 31st was lately delivered to me. The papers inform me you are at the Hague, and uncertain what stay you may make there. I send this by Mr. Voss, who is returning to London by the way of Amsterdam. I inclose you the last letters from Mr. Barclay and Mr. Carmichael, by which we may hope our peace with Morocco is signed, thanks to the good offices of a nation which is honest, if it is not wise. This event, with the naval cruises of Portugal, will, I hope, quiet the Atlantic for us. I am informed, by authority to be depended on, that insurance is made at Lorient on American vessels sailing under their own flag, against every event, at the price usually paid for risks of the sea alone. Still, how-

ever, the most important of our marts, the Mediterranean, is shut. I wrote you a proposition to accept Mr. Barclay's offer of going to Algiers. I have no hope of its making peace; but it may add to our information, abate the ardor of those pirates against us, and shut the mouths of those who might impute our success at Morocco and failure at Algiers to a judicious appointment to the one place and an injudicious one at the other. Let me hear from you as soon as possible on this, and, if you accede to it, send me all the necessary papers ready signed. I inclose you the article "États Unis" of one of the volumes of the *Encyclopédie*, lately published. The author, M. de Meusnier, was introduced to me by the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. He asked of me information on the subject of our States, and left with me a number of queries to answer. Knowing the importance of setting to rights a book so universally diffused, and which will go down to late ages, I answered his queries as fully as I was able, went into a great many calculations for him, and offered to give further explanations where necessary. He then put his work into my hands. I read it, and was led by that into a still greater number of details, by way of correcting what he had at first written, which was indeed a mass of errors and misconceptions from beginning to end. I returned him his work and my details; but he did not communicate it to me after he had corrected it. It has, therefore, come out with many errors, which I would have advised him to correct, and the rather as he was very well disposed. He has still left in a great deal of the Abbé Raynal, that is to say, a great deal of falsehood; and he has stated other things on bad information. I am sorry I had not another correction of it. He has paid me for my trouble in the true coin of his country, most unmerciful compliment. This, with his other errors, I should surely have struck out, had he sent me the work, as I expected, before it went to the press. I find, in fact, that he is happiest of whom the world says least, good or bad. I think, if I had had a little more warning, my desire to see Holland, as well as to meet again Mrs. Adams and yourself, would have tempted me to take a flying trip there. I wish you may be tempted to take Paris in your return; you will find many very happy to see you here, and none more so than, dear sir, your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 11 September, 1786.

Dear Sir, — On my return from Holland, on the 6th instant, I found your favors of the 8th and 13th August. On my arrival at the Hague, the exchange of ratifications was made on the 8th August with the Baron de Thulemeier, and I had it printed. It is only in French. Copies shall be sent you as soon as I can find an opportunity. We were present at Utrecht at the august ceremony of swearing in their new magistrates. In no instance of ancient or modern history have the people ever asserted more unequivocally their own inherent and unalienable sovereignty. But whatever pleasure I might have in enlarging upon this subject, I must forbear.

The affair of the oil has taken a turn here. The whalemen, both at Greenland and the southward, have been unsuccessful, and the price of spermaceti oil has risen above £50 per ton. Boylston's ship arrived with two or three hundred tons, and, finding he could pay the duties and make a profit of twenty-five per cent., he sold his cargo here, instead of going to France, as he intended. This circumstance will oblige the French court, or the French merchants, or both, to take other measures, or they will lose this trade.

The price of oil will rise in Boston so much, that I am afraid Mr. Barrett's contract must be fulfilled at an immense loss.

As to Mr. Lamb's settlement, I still think he had better embark forthwith for New York from Spain. If he cannot, he may transmit to you and me his account, and remit to us the balance in favor of the United States.

Mr. Barclay's proposal of going to Tunis and Tripoli, I suppose appears to you, as it does to me, from what we learned from the ambassador from Tripoli in London, to be unnecessary, at least till we hear further from congress. It seems to me, too, very unlikely that any benefit will be had from the journey to Algiers.

I wish to see the treaty with Morocco, and to know the particulars of that affair first. At present I believe we are taken in, and that we shall be plagued with demands for annual presents. I confess I have no faith in the supposition that Spanish

interference has counted for money, or, at least, that it will pass long for it.

If, however, you are clearly in favor of sending Mr. Barclay to Algiers, I will make out a commission, and send it to you for your signature, signed by myself, because I would not set up my own judgment against yours, Mr. Carmichael's, and Mr. Barclay's; but I confess at present I cannot see any advantage in it, but, on the contrary, several disadvantages. Mr. Randal is gone to congress, and we may expect further orders ere long.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 27 October, 1786.

Dear Sir, — When the ratification of congress, of their treaty with the King of Prussia, arrived here, the term limited for the exchange of it was near expiring. As a few members of the States-General had discovered uneasiness at my coming to London without going to the Hague to take leave, it seemed a convenient opportunity to go over and show them as much of the respect they required as remained in my power. Accordingly I went, and, making the customary visits to the president, pensionary, and secretary, renewed the assurances of the friendship, esteem, and respect of the United States for their High Mightinesses and the republic; and the visit appeared to be kindly received. The exchange of ratifications was soon made with the Baron de Thulemeier, who had time to transmit the act of congress to the great prince who first proposed the treaty some days before he expired. The ratification, under the signature of Frederic the Great, is here inclosed.

At the same time, sir, you will receive so much of the substance of a treaty of commerce between France and England as the ministry have thought fit to publish. This is so great an event, and must have consequences so extensive, that I feel myself incapable of forming any judgment of it upon the whole. Every treaty of commerce between these nations, for three hundred years, has been found beneficial to France and hurtful to England. But at present this nation is very sanguine the

advantage will be theirs. They boast of the superior skill of their manufacturers, of the superlative excellence of their manufactures, the multitude of inventions and machines peculiar to themselves, by which time and labor are saved, and productions sold cheaper than in any other country. A market like France, where five-and-twenty millions of people have occasion for English fabrics, must be a valuable acquisition. Commercial connections, by softening prejudices, may lessen the disposition to war; and a friendship, even an alliance, with France, would enable the two nations to govern the world. This is, at present, the style of conversation; and the treaty appears to be popular.

France and England are both endeavoring, at this moment, to impose upon each other, by professing desires of friendship which they never felt. The secret motive of both is to impose upon the United States of America. The English imagine that, by assuming an appearance of friendship for France, they shall excite a jealousy of France in America, and provoke congress to break their faith with her. The French are in hopes that, by putting on a show of familiarity with England, they shall stimulate congress to make them proposals of closer connections. The whole, at bottom, is a farce of political hypocrisy. The United States will continue steadily, it is to be hoped, on the reserve.

England is now pursuing her proposals of treaties of commerce with the Emperor, the Empress of Russia, with Denmark, and Portugal, and perhaps Spain. France and the Emperor took the only way to compel England to treat, when they, by their edicts, prohibited British manufactures. The United States must imitate the example, or they will never be attended to.

The present appearances of friendship are forced and feigned. The time may not be far distant, however, when we may see a combination of England and the house of Bourbon against the United States. It is not in gloomy moments only, but in the utmost gayety of heart, I cannot get rid of the persuasion that the fair plant of liberty in America must be watered in blood. You have seen enough in Europe to know that these melancholy forebodings are no chimeras. There is such a disposition in the principal powers who have possessions in the Indies, that our country will find no other resources but to swear her child-

dren on the holy altar to fight them all at once in defence of her liberties. It may have some tendency to save us from such extremities, if we enter into treaties with the two empires, for these will soon be jealous of any connection between France and England.

The Chevalier de Pinto's courier is not yet returned from Lisbon with the treaty. This worthy minister makes frequent apologies on account of the absence of the Queen in the country, and the unsettled state of the Court. But, perhaps, there may be difficulties which he is not apprised of, or not inclined to mention.

Mr. Barclay's treaty with Morocco is not yet come to hand. Congress will, I hope, determine whether we are to send him or any other to Algiers without more money in his hands. It would cost us three or four thousand pounds to send any one; and, unless he has power to offer larger presents, he would only make matters worse.

I hope our country, in every part of it, will cherish their militia as the apple of their eyes, and put every thing in as good a posture of defence as possible, and keep up a constant expectation of war. This is the best and most serious advice that can be given by

Dear sir, &c.

John Adams.

THE TREASURY BOARD TO JOHN ADAMS.

Board of Treasury, 31 October, 1786.

Sir, — In your letter of the 19th May last you were pleased to inform us that you had already accepted bills which had been drawn on you to a considerable amount by Messrs. Barclay and Lamb, in consequence of the appropriation which had been made by congress for forming treaties with the Barbary powers; but, as we have no advice from you since that date, we are at a loss to know whether the whole, or what part, of the appropriation has been drawn for on the Dutch commissioners to the present day. The accounts transmitted by those gentlemen, to the first of June last, do not specify the particular disbursements for this object; but, as far as we are able to form an estimate from the accounts transmitted, we presume that,

out of the various drafts you have made on them to the first of June last, 76,000 florins have been on account of the Barbary negotiations. If this is the case, 114,000 florins remained after that day, subject to the appropriation above mentioned.

The embarrassments of the government, for want of a steady and operative system of revenue, are daily growing more distressing; and such commotions have of late prevailed in the States of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, that we cannot promise ourselves that the complexion of our affairs will soon change for a better. Thus circumstanced, it has not been in our power, since the remittance of the last sum of 144,000 florins, through your hands to make any considerable remittance to the Dutch commissioners. We wish, therefore, most anxiously, that the whole of the moneys appropriated by congress may not have been exhausted by an unsuccessful attempt to form treaties; as we are extremely apprehensive that, in this case, there may not be sufficient funds, in the month of February next, in the hands of the Dutch commissioners, to enable them to discharge the interest which will then be due; and it is not in our power to remit, in season, any funds to make up a deficiency.

If, therefore, you can possibly avoid drawing out of the hands of Messrs. Willink the whole of the moneys which have been appropriated for the Barbary treaties till the February interest is discharged, we must request the favor of you to do it; and no time shall be lost on our part in making such further remittances as may complete any part of the sum of 200,000 florins which may have been applied towards the payment of interest.

We are, with great respect, &c.

Samuel Osgood,
Walter Livingston,
Arthur Lee.

SAMUEL OSGOOD TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 14 November, 1786.

Dear Sir, — I have to acknowledge the receipt of your favor, which I should have answered sooner had any thing within the compass of my knowledge occurred, of sufficient consequence to

inform you of. The present secretary for foreign affairs, I have no doubt, keeps you well informed of all the political occurrences here.

But in a government where expedients only keep up its existence, it is impossible to foresee what sudden and unexpected changes may take place. The federal government seems to be as near a crisis as it is possible for it to be. The State governments are weak and selfish enough, and they will of course annihilate the first. Their stubborn dignity will never permit a federal government to exist. There are, however, a few men in every state, who are very seriously impressed with the idea that, without a proper federal head, the individual states must fall a prey to themselves, or any power that is disposed to injure them. With this idea, they are thinking, very seriously, in what manner to effect the most easy and natural change of the present form of the federal government to one more energetic, that will, at the same time, create respect, and secure properly life, liberty, and property. It is, therefore, not uncommon to hear the principles of government stated in common conversation. Emperors, kings, stadtholders, governors-general, with a senate or house of lords, and house of commons, are frequently the topics of conversation. Many are for abolishing all the state governments, and for establishing some kind of general government; but I believe very few agree in the general principles, much less in the details, of such a government.

How to effect a change, is the difficulty. The confederation provides that congress shall make the alterations, and that they shall be adopted by the several legislatures. Yet the idea of a special convention, appointed by the states, to agree upon and propose such alterations as may appear necessary, seems to gain ground. But the danger is, that neither congress nor a convention will do the business. For the situation of the United States, and of some of the particular states, is such, that an army must be kept up, and the probability is, at present, that this army will be seriously employed; and, in case of a civil war, the men of property will certainly attach themselves very closely to that army, the final issue of which, it is feared, will be, that the army will make the government of the United States. Many say, already, any change will be for the better,

and are ready to risk any thing to effect it. The disturbances in Massachusetts seem most likely to produce some very important event. It is a little surprising to some, how they come to break out in such a manner there. It is said that the insurgents have two objects in view; one, to reduce their state debt and those securities given by the United States to citizens of that state for their services or moneys loaned, to their current value in the market; the other, to annihilate private debts. Perhaps this may be in part true, and the greater number may have nothing further in view but to remedy some supposed grievances; yet, as it affords a fine opportunity for the restless enemies of this country to sow dissensions, we have too much reason to believe, that they are not only looking on as spectators, but that they are industriously employed in disseminating disaffection to the present forms of government. If these enemies are British, or their old adherents among us, which seems to be the case, because they are traced from Hampshire and Berkshire to Vermont, and from thence to Canada, if they are British, their object must be something further than mere revenge; and that object can be nothing short of establishing a monarchical government in this country, and placing some one of George's sons on the throne. If this object is worth to the British from five to ten millions sterling, and they can advance the money, they can and will effect it; not by force of arms, for, if they should come out openly against us, we should fight again; but, be assured, this country is extremely poor, as well as extravagant, and I have no doubt that ten millions, artfully applied, would secure nearly the whole country. That the British will and do cherish all their old adherents, is not to be doubted; and that those adherents never will be Americans, is a principle founded in nature.

That the French will not be silent, unoperative spectators in these negotiations, if they should happen, is most certainly to be expected. They wish to keep us just where we are, or, if a little more insignificant, quite as well; they will, therefore, view without emotion any civil commotions that tend to weaken us. But if there should be any danger of the scales preponderating in favor of any other foreign power, they will act with their usual address.

The British party is and will be great; the French party

also; the genuine Americans, few; the speculators numerous, who care not what the government is, so that they can speculate upon and spunge it.

Mr. Jay will probably have furnished you with the newspapers of this country, which will contain much with respect to the hostile disposition of the Indians. That the British instigate them to make depredations on us, is very natural; but why they are reënforcing Canada, which by the public papers appears to be the case, is not so easy to determine.

All things are operating here to bring the Cincinnati into vogue. I cannot say I think they are all for supporting government, but they are for having government.

The leader of the insurgents in Massachusetts is entitled to the ribbon and eagle. He left the army in the fall of 1780, being then a captain of good reputation; his name is Shays, a man without education, but not without abilities. He is privately involved, which may be the reason why he has adopted such violent measures. It is generally supposed that he cannot retreat.

As to the situation of the finances of the United States, they can scarcely be in a worse condition. As to making any further attempt to discharge any part of the principal or interest of our foreign debt, it is in vain. The thirteen states do not pay enough to keep the civil list together, which does not require more than one hundred thousand dollars a year. I have inclosed you a schedule, which will give you a full view of the requisitions of congress, the payments, and balances due.

I am, sir, with great respect, &c.

Samuel Osgood.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 24 January, 1787.

Dear Sir, — I must beg the indulgence of congress while I solicit their attention, for a few moments, to some particulars which are very interesting to me personally, and have some relation to the foreign affairs of the United States. It is now in the beginning of the tenth year since I embarked first for Europe, in obedience to the commands of the United States. The various services, to which they have been pleased to destine

me, are known to congress by their own records; and the particular details of the execution of their orders, as far as circumstances have permitted, have been transmitted, from time to time, to congress and their ministers of foreign affairs, so that it would be unnecessary to repeat any thing of that kind upon this occasion. The mission, with which they honored me to the United Provinces of the Low Countries, both as public minister and as agent to negotiate a loan of money, is not yet revoked. The commissions to negotiate with the Barbary States, in which I had the honor to be associated with Mr. Jefferson, are still in force. The commission to his Britannic Majesty will expire on the 24th of February, 1788, this day thirteen months, unless sooner revoked. I take this early opportunity of informing congress of my intention to return to America as soon after the expiration of this commission as possible, that measures may be taken in season to complete all the arrangements which that honorable assembly may judge necessary.

I have been a witness of so much respect and affection to the United States of America in the Low Countries, and have there experienced so much candor and friendship to myself, that it is natural for me to wish to take leave of their High Mightinesses with decency, and according to the forms that the usages of nations prescribe. I must, therefore, solicit a letter of recall. It would be a pleasure to me to go over in person to the Hague, in order to present it; but as I have the most candid assurances that a memorial sent from hence would be equally well received, I shall probably avoid the expense of a journey. If congress judge a minister at that Court necessary, they will appoint one of course; and if there is further occasion for borrowing any small sums of money, they will commission a new agent.

Colonel Franks arrived here this morning with the treaty with Morocco, and will be despatched to congress without delay. There is no probability of any further progress or success with the Barbary powers, without further orders from congress, and larger sums of money. If congress should give fresh instructions, and order more money to be appropriated, I must request that they will associate some other person with Mr. Jefferson, if they should not judge it more convenient for that able and excellent minister to conduct it alone, or designate some other single per-

son to the service. It may be the intention of congress to recall me from this Court before the expiration of their present commission; but as this would be a measure of *éclat*, perhaps they may judge it more prudent to avoid it. If congress determine to send another minister, I hope it will be done in such season that he may arrive before my departure. If no other minister is sent, it will, perhaps, be thought necessary to leave the negotiation in the hands of a *chargé d'affaires*. Colonel Smith has, at present, only a commission as secretary of legation. I may be permitted, I hope, without presuming too far, to recommend him to this office, and solicit it for him. When he was appointed secretary, he was unknown to me, even by name. He has since formed a connection in my family, which renders it delicate for me to say any thing in his favor. Such a circumstance, however, cannot forfeit his title to justice from me; and it is no more, to say that his conduct, his talents, and his industry merit a much higher station than has yet been assigned him. You know perfectly well, sir, that the office even of a public minister of the second order is a station extremely humiliating at any Court in Europe. At Versailles, at Madrid, at the Hague, and at London, the difference between ambassadors and ministers plenipotentiary or envoys is so immense, that the latter are little more regarded than the *maître d'hôtel* of a minister of state. This is a fact known to you, but not known to our countrymen; and, therefore, I think it my duty to mention it, that it may be considered. The place of *chargé d'affaires* is so much below that of minister, and that of simple secretary of legation so much below that of *chargé d'affaires*, that nothing can reconcile a gentleman, who has commanded in an army through a whole war with reputation, to it, but the most decided determination to sacrifice his feelings to the good, or rather to the sense, of his country. I need not add that, in the present times and circumstances, these things are more intolerable in England than elsewhere.

May I be permitted to request that congress would be pleased to take up this subject as soon as their more important affairs will permit, that their arrangements may be received in Europe in time to despatch the few things, both of a public and private nature, that will remain for me to do? A letter of recall from Holland, and an appointment in my place in the commission to

the Barbary States, are of importance to be expedited early. If they do not arrive in season before the expiration of the commission to St. James, I shall presume that it is the intention of congress to take no further arrangement in those affairs, and embark with my family for America in one of the early spring ships in 1788. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN JAY.

London, 25 January, 1787.

(*Private.*)

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I wrote you yesterday, in your ministerial capacity as well as mine, my ultimate determination to revisit my country, this time twelve months. I now write to you this private letter to entreat you, as a friend, to promote, in every way in your power, an arrangement as early as possible, by which I may be permitted to return with decorum. It is not from a desire to stimulate anybody to vote for a new commission, to be sent me to this Court, which may, for what I know, be suspected by some, but from a sincere and unalterable resolution to come home in all events, that I have taken this measure thus early. It would hurt me to come home in disobedience, but in all events I will come home. If congress should send me a new commission, I shall certainly return it unaccepted. This is between you and me, and not intended to offend the feelings of any man whatever. My northern friends may wish me to remain longer in Europe, but I must be excused.

I shall complete, with submission to Providence, my ten years in Europe, and then go home.

My family join with me in affectionate compliments to you and yours. A year will soon come about, and then, or soon after, I may have the pleasure of kissing your hand.

Mean time I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE DELEGATES OF MASSACHUSETTS IN CONGRESS.

London, 25 January, 1787.

(*Private.*)

Gentlemen, — I had yesterday the honor of writing to congress my desire and intention to return to America at the expiration of my commission to this Court. I know not the sentiments of my friends in congress, and possibly some of them may wish me to remain longer in Europe. But I beg leave, gentlemen, to signify to you, in this private manner, my fixed resolution to return in all events. Candor requires that I should inform you of this, to prevent you, gentlemen, from compromising yourselves and our state, as well as me. It would expose me to an odium, and do no honor to any member of congress who should vote for me to remain longer in Europe, if I should come home against orders, or without permission.

Let me therefore request the favor of you, gentlemen, and of all the friends I have in congress, to promote my recall, according to the decent plan I have proposed to congress.

I hope the measure will be adopted with perfect unanimity. To be explicit, I am determined to come home, though I should be compelled to do it in an ungracious manner; but I hope this will not be made necessary.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

THE COMMISSIONERS TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 27 January, 1787.

Sir, — We had the honor of transmitting to congress copies of the commission and instructions which, in pursuance of the authority delegated to us, were given to Mr. Barclay to conclude a negotiation with Morocco.

Mr. Barclay has conducted that business to a happy conclusion, and has brought with him testimonials of his prudent conduct, from the Emperor of Morocco and his minister, so clear and full, that we flatter ourselves Mr. Barclay will receive the approbation of congress.

Mr. Barclay has received somewhat more than four thou-

sand pounds sterling for the expenses of presents and all other things.

Colonel Franks, who accompanied Mr. Barclay in his tedious journeys and difficult negotiations, in the character of secretary, will be despatched to congress, and will have the honor of delivering this letter, together with the treaty, the Emperor's letter to congress, and a variety of other papers relative to this mission, a schedule of which is annexed.

The resolution of congress, vacating Mr. Lamb's commission and instructions, has been forwarded to him, and we have repeatedly advised him to return to New York. That gentleman has received somewhat more than three thousand pounds sterling of the public money, for which he is accountable to congress.

We beg leave to recommend Mr. Barclay and Colonel Franks to the favorable consideration of congress.

It is no small mortification not to be able to communicate any intelligence concerning the treaty with Portugal. The Chevalier de Pinto is equally uninformed. His own confidential domestic, despatched to Lisbon last spring, has been constantly waiting on the minister for an answer, but has obtained none, and has not yet returned to London. The treaty between France and England has probably excited parties and surprise in Portugal, and the system of men and measures is not yet settled. The apologies are, the Queen's absence in the country, and the prime minister's indisposition.

The article of money is become so scarce and precious, that we shall be obliged to suspend all further proceedings in the Barbary business, even for the redemption of prisoners, until we shall be honored with fresh instructions from congress.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams,
Thomas Jefferson.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

London, 27 January, 1787.

My Lord, — Last night I received the card your Lordship did me the honor to write me yesterday, inclosing a petition to the right honorable the lords commissioners of his Majesty's

treasury, from John Hales, relative to sixteen Chinese seamen who are alleged to have informed Mr. Hales that they came from India in the Hyder or Hydrœa, Captain Clark, belonging to the United States of America, to Ostend, where they were discharged and caused to take passage to London, in hopes of obtaining a passage to their own country.

All these allegations, my Lord, are very surprising to me; having no knowledge of any such ship as the Hyder or Hydrœa, or of any such person as Captain Clark. Humanity, my Lord, requires that the unhappy men should not be left to suffer; but as I have no knowledge, information, or instructions concerning them, I have no authority to do any thing for their relief.

There is reason to apprehend, my Lord, that there is some mystery in this business, which it will be for the interest and honor of both countries to clear up; for which reason, I shall do myself the honor to transmit your Lordship's note and the memorial to congress, that the truth of the facts may be searched to the bottom, and such measures taken as the interests of humanity, as well as the honor and interests of both countries require. With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SIDI HADJI BEN ABDELLECK FENNISH.

London, 27 January, 1787.

WE have received, with high satisfaction, the letter which your Excellency, by the command of his Majesty the Emperor of Morocco, did us the honor to write us on the first day of the blessed month Ramadan, 1200, and transmitted to us by the Honorable Thomas Barclay, who was sent to your Court in order to negotiate an amicable treaty of peace and commerce between his Majesty the Emperor of Morocco, and all his dominions, and those of the United States of America. We are happy to learn that this matter has been fortunately concluded, to the satisfaction of all parties. The contents of the treaty we have learned from the said envoy, the Honorable Thomas Barclay, to whom his Imperial Majesty delivered it, with a letter to the United States.

It is with the most respectful satisfaction that we learn from your Excellency, that the conduct of our said envoy, the

Honorable Thomas Barclay, has the entire approbation of his Imperial Majesty, and that he has behaved with integrity and honor since his arrival in his Imperial Majesty's dominions; and, above all, that his Imperial Majesty has been graciously pleased to give him two honorable, favorable, and unparalleled audiences, signifying his Majesty's perfect satisfaction at his conduct.

We pray your Excellency, if you think proper, to express to his Imperial Majesty the high sense we entertain of his Majesty's friendship to the United States of America, and of his goodness to the said Honorable Mr. Barclay. And we request of your Excellency to accept of our sincere thanks for the kind assistance you have given to the said envoy in the course of these negotiations.

With much pleasure, we learn that your Excellency is charged, by his Imperial Majesty, with the affairs of our country at his Court, and doubt not that your Excellency will do all that lies in your power to promote the friendly intercourse that is so happily begun.

We shall transmit, without delay, to the honorable the congress of the United States an account of all these proceedings, and entertain the fullest assurance that they will receive, in due time, the approbation of that august assembly.

May the providence of the one Almighty God, whose kingdom is the only existing one, protect your Excellency!

We have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams,
Thomas Jefferson.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 3 February, 1787.

Sir, — I wrote a few days since, by Colonel Franks, who embarks in the French packet from Havre de Grace with the Morocco treaty. There is no further intelligence of the Portugal business, nor any better prospect or more agreeable disposition in this country, whatever artifices may be employed in America to keep up delusive hopes.

Parliament opened with an uncommon gloom, and has been sitting in a mournful silence. Nobody dares oppose the French

treaty, yet nobody seems to have any confidence in it. It seems truly a forced plant; something to appease France and amuse the people. The revenue is found to be greatly deficient. A new loan and fresh taxes are expected. A dead taciturnity prevails about America.

The gazettes are employed, and every coffee-house and bookseller's shop filled with talkers, to keep up the spirits of the people, at any expense of truth. The holding of our frontier posts is found to cost government more money annually than the whole trade is worth, nay, than the whole capital employed in it.

Mr. Pitt's plan for the session is not yet developed. They are skirmishing about Hastings and Rodney, who, I suppose, have nearly all the scribblers enlisting for or against them; yet Hastings must be acquitted, and I suppose Rodney remunerated, right or wrong; such is the state of this nation.

Inclosed is a copy of the convention between France and England, which was sent me yesterday by Lord Carmarthen, and a letter from Mr. Hales relative to the East India ship which it is supposed was made an American bottom, a practice which congress will, no doubt, judge proper to discountenance. As the politics of parliament shall open to view, I shall do myself the honor to transmit you still further accounts of them.

By Colonel Franks I had the honor to convey to congress my intention to return home at the expiration of my commission to this Court. A duplicate will go by this opportunity; a life so useless to the public, and so insipid to myself, as mine is in Europe, has become a burden to me, as well as to my countrymen. By the first packet or convenient merchant-ship in the spring of 1788, I shall embark with my family, if my life and health, enough to make the voyage, remain to me, unless congress should see fit to recall me sooner, which would be so much the more agreeable. It will be necessary that arrangements should be made as early as possible, and the pleasure of congress signified, whether the secretary of legation is to return with me, or remain longer here.

With great respect and esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 6 February, 1787.

Dear Sir, — Your favors by Colonel Franks have come safely to hand. He will set out from hence the 8th instant, the packet being to sail from Havre the 10th. I inclose you the copy of a letter from Mr. Barclay, and of the paper it inclosed. In a letter from Mr. Carmichael is a postscript, dated 25th December, in the following words: — "Since writing the preceding, the Portuguese ambassador has pressed me to hint that the present moment is favorable to push our treaty with his Court." In the body of the letter he says, "The Comte d'Expilly has promised me to continue his attention to our prisoners during his stay at Algiers, and I have also engaged the Consul of Spain, who remains there on his return, to take care of them. Advances have been made for their support, which ought to be refunded." I suppose that these advances have been made by order of Mr. Lamb, and that, his powers being at an end, it will be incumbent on us to take measures on that subject. The Comte de Vergennes is extremely ill; his disease is gouty; we have for some days had hopes it would fix itself decidedly in the foot. It shows itself there at times, as also in the shoulder, the stomach, &c. M. de Calonne is likewise ill; but his complaints are of a rheumatic kind, which he has often had before. The illness of these two ministers has occasioned the postponement of the assembly of the notables to the 14th, and probably will yet postpone it. Nothing is yet known of the objects of that meeting. I send you a pamphlet, giving a summary account of all the meetings of a general nature which have taken place heretofore. The treaty between Russia and this country is certainly concluded; but its contents are not yet known.

I shall set out for the waters of Aix on the 15th instant, so that I am unable to say when and whence I shall have the honor of addressing you again; but I take measures for the conveying to me on my road all letters, so that, should any thing extraordinary require it, I can at all times be recalled to Paris in a fortnight. I shall hope to hear from you at times, as if I were in Paris. I thank you much for the valuable pre-

sent of your book.[1] The subject of it is interesting, and I am sure it is well treated. I shall take it on my journey, that I may have time to study it. You told me once you had had thoughts of writing on the subject of hereditary aristocracy. I wish you would carry it into execution. It would make a proper sequel to the present work. I wish you all possible happiness; and have the honor to be, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 20 February, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — I am now to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of January 25th. Col. Franks sailed in the packet of this month from Havre for New York. This arrangement of the packets opens a direct communication between Paris and America; and if we succeed, as I expect we shall, in getting Honfleur made a free port, I hope to see that place become the deposit for our whale oil, rice, tobacco, and furs, and that from thence what is not wanted in this country may be distributed to others. You remember giving me a letter of credit on Messrs. Willink & Staphorst for one thousand guineas, to pay for the swords and medals. When the swords were finished, I drew on the Van den Yvers, with whom the money was deposited, for 6,500 livres to pay for the swords. They paid it. A medal is now finished, and others will very soon be; but these gentlemen say they must have fresh orders. In the mean time, the workmen complain. Will you be so good as to draw in favor of Mr. Grand on Willink & Co. for the balance of the thousand guineas (which is about the sum that will be necessary), and send the bill to Mr. Grand, who, in my absence, will negotiate it, and pay the workmen? I inclose you Van den Yver's answer. The meeting of the notables on Thursday, and the necessity of paying my court to our new minister, will detain me till Friday, and perhaps till Tuesday next. Nothing is known yet of the objects of this assembly. I inclose you two new pamphlets relative to it, and will inform you of whatever I can discover relative to it during my stay.

[1] The first volume of the *Defence of the American Constitutions*, then just published.

I learn, with real pain, the resolution you have taken of quitting Europe. Your presence on this side of the Atlantic gave me a confidence that, if any difficulties should arise within my department, I should always have one to advise with, on whose counsels I could rely. I shall now feel bewidowed. I do not wonder at your being tired out by the conduct of the Court you are at. But is there not room to do a great deal of good for us in Holland, in the department of money? No one can do it so well as yourself. But you have taken your resolution, I am sure, on mature consideration; and I have nothing to offer, therefore, but my regrets. If any thing transpires from the notables, before my departure, worth communication, you shall yet hear from me. In the mean time, believe me, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 23 February, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — The notables met yesterday. The King opened the assembly with a short speech, wherein he expressed his inclination to consult with them on the affairs of his kingdom, to receive their opinions on the plans he had digested, and to endeavor to imitate the head of his family, Henry IV., whose name is so dear to the nation. The speech was affectionate. The *garde des sceaux* spoke about twenty minutes, complimented the clergy, the *noblesse*, the magistrates, and *tiers état*. The comptroller-general spoke about an hour. He enumerated the expenses necessary to arrange his department when he came to it; he said, his returns had been minutely laid before the King; he took a review of the preceding administrations, and more particularly of M. Neckar's. He detailed the improvements which had been made; he portrayed the present state of the finances, and sketched the several schemes proposed for their improvement. He spoke on a change in the form of the taxes, the removal of the interior custom-houses to the frontiers, provincial administrations, and some other objects. The assembly was then divided into committees. To-day there was to be another grand assembly, the plans more fully explained, and referred to the discussion of the committees. The grand assembly will meet once a week, and vote individually. The

propriety of my attending the first audience day of Count Montmorin, which will not be till the 27th, retards my departure till then.

I have read your book with infinite satisfaction and improvement. It will do great good in America; its learning and its good sense will, I hope, make it an institute for our politicians, old as well as young. There is one opinion in it, however, which I will ask you to reconsider, because it appears to me not entirely accurate, and not likely to do good. Page 362.[1] "Congress is not a legislative, but a diplomatic assembly." Separating into parts the whole sovereignty of our States, some of these parts are yielded to congress. Upon these I should think them both legislative and executive, and that they would have been judiciary also, had not the confederation required them, for certain purposes, to appoint a judiciary. It has, accordingly, been the decision of our courts, that the confederation is a part of the law of the land, and superior in authority to the ordinary laws, because it cannot be altered by the legislature of any one State. I doubt whether they are at all a diplomatic assembly. On the first news of this work, there were proposals to translate it. Fearing it might be murdered in that operation, I endeavored to secure a good translator. This is done, and I lend him my copy to translate from. It will be immediately commenced, to prevent others attempting it. I am, with sincere esteem and respect, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 1 March, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — I am much obliged to you for your favors of February 20th and 23rd, by Mr. Carnes, and the curious pamphlets.

Opening a direct communication between Paris and America will facilitate the trade of the two countries very much, and the new treaty between France and England will promote it still more. John Bull does not see it, and if he does not see a thing at first, you know it is a rule with him ever afterwards to

[1] Of the first edition. The passage will be found in Vol. iv. p. 579 of this work, with Mr. Jefferson's comment in a note.

swear that it does not exist, even when he does both see it and feel it.

I have this moment written to Messrs. Willink and Van Staphorst to remit to you, or Mr. Grand, in your absence, what remains to be received to make up the thousand guineas for the swords and medals, you having before drawn for 6,500 livres tournois as part of them.

My resolution of quitting Europe has been taken upon mature deliberation; but really upon motives of necessity, as much, at least, as choice. Congress cannot, consistently with their own honor and dignity, renew my commission to this Court; and I assure you, I should hold it so inconsistent with my own honor and dignity, little as that may be, that, if it were possible for congress to forget theirs, I would not forget mine, but send their commission back to them, unless a minister were sent from his Britannic Majesty to congress. As to a residence in Holland, that climate is so destructive to my health, that I could never bear it; and I am sure it would be fatal to her, on whom depends all the satisfaction that I have in life. No consideration would tempt me to think of removing to that country with my family. For a man who has been for thirty years rolling like a stone, never three years in the same place, it is no very pleasant speculation to cross the seas, with a family, in a state of uncertainty what is to be his fate, what reception he shall meet at home, whether he shall settle down in private life to his plough, or push into the turbulent scenes of sedition and tumult; whether he be sent to congress, or a convention, or God knows what. If it lay in my power, I would take a vow to retire to my little turnip-yard, and never again quit it. I feel very often a violent disposition to take some resolution, and swear to it; but upon the whole, it is best to preserve my liberty to do as I please, according to circumstances.

The approbation you express in general of my poor volume, is a vast consolation to me. It is a hazardous enterprise, and will be an unpopular work in America for a long time. When I am dead, it may be regretted that such advice was not taken in the season of it. But as I have made it, early in life and all along, a rule to conceal nothing from the people which appeared to me material for their happiness and prosperity, however unpopular it might be at the time, or with particular

parties, I am determined not now to begin to flatter popular prejudices and party passions, however they may be countenanced by great authorities. The opinion you object to, page 362, that "congress is not a legislative, but a diplomatic assembly," I should wish to have considered as a problem rather for consideration, than as an opinion; and as a problem, too, relative to the confederation as it now stands, rather than to any other plan that may be in contemplation of the states. It is a most difficult topic, and no man at a distance can judge of it so well as those in America. If the book should be translated into French, I wish you to insert this in a note. You have laid me under great obligation, by taking the trouble to secure a good translator; if the thing is worth translating at all, it will not surely bear to lose any thing by the translation. But will not the government prohibit it? If I should get well home, and spend a few years in retirement, I shall pursue this subject somewhat further; but I hope never to be left again to publish so hasty a production as this.

A work upon the subject you mention, *nobility in general*, which I once hinted to you a wish to see handled at large, would be too extensive and splendid for my means and forces. It would require many books which I have not, and a more critical knowledge, both of ancient and modern languages, than at my age a man can aspire to. There are but two circumstances which will be regretted by me when I leave Europe; one is, the opportunity of searching any questions of this kind in any books that may be wanted; and the other will be, the interruption of that immediate correspondence with you, which is one of the most agreeable events in my life. There are four or five persons here, with whom I hold a friendly intercourse, and shall leave with some degree of pain; but I am not at home in this country.

With every affectionate and friendly sentiment, I am,

John Adams.

TO WILLIAM S. SMITH.

London, 11 April, 1787.

Dear Sir, — Congress, by their resolutions of February the 3d, 1787, determined that the letter to the Queen of Portugal

herewith delivered you, should be transmitted to her Faithful Majesty by your hands. You will, therefore, prepare yourself as soon as conveniently may be, and proceed to Lisbon. In your way, as you pass through France and Spain, you will of course pay your respects to the ministers of the United States residing at those Courts, and to the ministers of foreign affairs of those sovereigns, and endeavor to collect intelligence of any kind, commercial or political, in which the United States may be interested. When you shall arrive at Lisbon, you will make your court to the minister of foreign affairs, and communicate to him the object of your mission, and take his advice concerning the delivery of the letter to her Most Faithful Majesty. If it should not be judged advisable to desire an audience, the minister himself will deliver the letter to his mistress.

In whatever country, or at whatever Court, you will remember to make your court to the ambassadors of all those sovereigns with whom the United States are in alliance, France, Holland, Sweden, Prussia. To all ministers, consuls, agents of these powers, you will pay a particular regard, while you show a respectful politeness to all others.

In all places, you will endeavor to collect information concerning the Barbary powers, and the situation of our unfortunate countrymen in captivity at Algiers, especially from Mr. Carmichael and Mr. Barclay in Spain, if you should chance to meet the latter.

At Lisbon, you will inform yourself particularly of the state of the war between Portugal and those piratical states; that of Venice with the same and Naples, and whether there is a prospect of peace; the force of the Algerines; the probability of their coming out of the straits this summer; the force of the Portuguese that is to cruise against them.

You will also inform yourself particularly of the state of the commerce between the United States and Portugal, and by what means it might be extended, improved, and increased, to the mutual advantage of both nations. You will make particular inquiries concerning sugars, the prices and qualities of Brazil sugars, raw or manufactured, to satisfy yourself whether our countrymen might not purchase those sugars to advantage, even for manufacture and exportation; an experiment has been made in France of a purchase of raw sugars for Boston, and it

is suspected might be made to greater advantage in Lisbon, for Philadelphia and New York, as well as Boston.

You will please to inquire whether the treaty, which was signed last May, between the American ministers and the Chevalier de Pinto, has been agreed to by his Court; and if not, what are the objections, and whether there is a prospect of a renewal of the negotiation. You will inquire particularly whether rice and indigo may be expected to obtain admission to Portugal from Carolina and Georgia, as they did before the late war; whether flour has any chance to be admitted; and what is the state of the trade of salt fish. As the whole of the negotiations with Portugal, as well as with the Barbary powers, for the last two years, have passed under your eye, and indeed through your hands, you are already acquainted with every particular, which renders any further instructions in detail unnecessary.

The languages of Europe are now become of much importance to us, and every gentleman employed under the United States, in the diplomatic department, ought to take all reasonable methods to acquaint himself with them. You will have, in this journey, a great opportunity of perfecting yourself in French, and of improving yourself in Spanish and the Portuguese, which is but a dialect of the Spanish, and in the Italian.

In the article of expenses, you will observe as much economy as possible, consistent with the comfort of your journey, the decency of your character, and the honor of your country. You will transmit your account to congress, or the Board of Treasury, or Mr. Barclay; and you will neglect no opportunity of writing to the secretary of foreign affairs. I know very well that the situation of your family, as well as your attention to the public service, will be motives sufficient to induce you to lose no time unnecessarily, and to return with as much expedition as the execution of the design of your journey will admit. The interest, the honor, and dignity of the United States will never be out of your thoughts; nor will any opportunity to promote either be neglected.

I wish you as pleasant a journey as the season promises, and a happy return to your friends and your services at this Court.

With great regard, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 19 April, 1787.

Dear Sir, — I do myself the honor to inclose the new act of parliament for regulating the trade between the territories of the United States of America and the dominions of the King of Great Britain, by which congress will see that the same system continues, and is fortified with fresh provisions. Provisions and lumber, the growth or production of the United States, are now prohibited from any foreign island. The West India planters and merchants complain to no purpose.

The Canada merchants give out that there is some negotiation on foot between Lord Dorchester and Vermont, the object of which is to give vent to the productions of that territory through Canada and the river St. Lawrence, that the West Indies may derive some assistance from that source.

Inclosed is another very curious bill that was moved in the House of Lords by one chancellor and seconded by another, Thurlow and Bathurst; but the Lords had honor enough to reject it. The project is said to have originated in General Arnold. The whole transaction shows the spirit of the present ministry. The chance of passing such a bill would have been greater in the House of Commons, where the ministers have a clearer majority. Some persons are of opinion that the present set cannot hold the reins much longer; but if they are not mistaken, there is little chance of a change for the better. What effect the changes in France may have, cannot be foreseen; but they cannot but be favorable to America.

With great regard, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, London, 8 May, 1787.

Dear Sir, — I am honored with your letter of April 2d, and am happy to receive the resolutions of congress inclosed in it, especially those of the 21st of March, 1787.

The convention at Philadelphia is to consist of members of

such ability, weight, and experience, that the result must be beneficial to the United States.

The settlement of so many great controversies, such as those between the Massachusetts and New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut, New York and Vermont, &c., shows that the union has great weight in the minds of the people. It is, indeed, an object of such magnitude, that great sacrifices ought to be made to its preservation. The consequences of a division of the continent cannot be foreseen fully, perhaps, by any man; but the most short-sighted must perceive such manifest danger, both from foreign powers and from one another, as cannot be looked upon without terror. The navigation of the Mississippi in the south, and the fisheries in the north, have ever appeared to me objects without which the union cannot be preserved; and therefore, whether the free *use* of them be obstructed for a time or not, it has ever appeared a dangerous policy to cede the *right* even for a moment.

Inclosed is a letter from our unfortunate countrymen in captivity at Algiers, which must be sent in the original, as there is not time to transcribe it.

I hope, sir, ere long to receive your orders, in consequence of the resolutions of congress, preparatory to my return home in the next spring. The conduct of this Court, in so imprudently, as well as uncivilly, neglecting to send a minister to America, renders it impossible for congress, consistently with their own dignity, to renew my commission. When the American minister shall leave this country, they will begin to think it necessary to send one of their own to New York. They may, for what I know, wish in this way to get rid of one whom they have not been able to mould to their views, in hopes of obtaining another of a more ductile temper. Let them try the experiment; I dare say they will be disappointed; for, if congress appoints another, he will not be found more to their taste. This country is in a shocking situation; its royal family, its administration, and its opposition, are all such as will never seduce an American from his duty. He will only be shocked at the sight, and confirmed in his natural principles and feelings.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 18 May, 1787.

Agreeably to what we had the honor to acquaint your Excellency the 15th instant, we have exerted ourselves to procure money for payment of the interest due the 1st proximo by the United States. A matter very difficult to be accomplished, as we had against us the late news from America, no immediate flattering prospects, and an excessive scarcity of money here at present. We have, however, been successful enough to persuade the undertakers to subscribe to a new loan for one million of florins, upon the following conditions.

One thousand bonds for one thousand guilders each, to be issued on the same conditions as the preceding loan of five per centum, the interest commencing the first of June.

Of which thousand bonds, two hundred and forty to be immediately negotiated to the subscribers; the one half of their amount to be paid upon the delivery of the bonds. The undertakers reserving to themselves the faculty of taking one month's credit for payment of the remaining half.

The surplus seven hundred and sixty bonds are to remain in our custody, subject to be delivered to the undertakers, each one in proportion to his subscription, at the same rate of those actually negotiated; at the expiration of which period, those on hand will be at the free disposal of congress.

Congress shall not be at liberty to make any further money negotiations in this country until the surplus seven hundred and sixty bonds shall be placed, or before the end of the eighteen months they are to lie at the choice of the undertakers to purchase them.

Such are the best conditions we have been able to obtain; and although the money will cost the United States eight per cent., including premium, our commission, brokerage, and charges, we deem ourselves fortunate to have been thus able to face the June interest; an object your Excellency justly views of the highest importance to the credit and interest of the United States.

By this arrangement, we shall be obliged to advance part of

the interest, until the undertakers shall have completed payment for the engaged bonds; upon which advances we do not doubt the United States will most readily admit our charge of interest.

We endeavored all in our power that the money should be received by us in *récépissés*, and thus leave you the time to visit this country at your conveniency, to pass the bonds. But the undertakers have insisted, as an absolute condition, that they should be liable to pay only on receipt of the bonds signed and perfected by you; so that there is an indispensable necessity for your Excellency's setting out for this country, with the full power you have from congress, by the packet which will leave Harwich next Wednesday, or at latest on Saturday, the 26th instant, when we will have everything ready, that your Excellency may be able to return by the next or following packet.

We request your Excellency to be assured nothing in our power was left untried to spare you this jaunt so suddenly; but since the payment of the June interest entirely depends upon this exertion of your Excellency, we are confident it will be undertaken with alacrity; and, upon this conviction, we have assumed to advertise the payment of the interest on the first of June, which is in all our newspapers of this day.

We are respectfully, &c.

Wilhem and Jan Willink,
Nic. and Jacob Van Staphorst.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, London, 16 June, 1787.

Sir, — Inclosed is a copy of the translation, from the Dutch into the English, of the contract entered into by me, in behalf of the United States, by virtue of their full power, for a million of guilders. This measure became absolutely necessary to prevent the total ruin of their credit, and the greatest injustice to their former creditors, who are possessed of their obligations: for the failure in payment of the interest, but for one day, would, in Holland, cause those obligations to depreciate in their value like paper money.

It is of great importance that this contract should receive a prompt ratification in congress, and be retransmitted to Amsterdam as soon as possible. Whether this loan may not enable congress, or their Board of Treasury, to raise the credit of their own paper at home, in some degree, is for them to consider; and whether the Board of Treasury may not purchase produce to advantage, and contract to have it delivered free of all risk and charges at Amsterdam, and pay for it in bills of exchange, I know not. If they do this, I should advise them to send one cargo to the house of Willinks, and another to the house of Van Staphorst, instead of consigning the whole jointly to both houses. This would not only excite an emulation between the two houses to make the most advantage for the interest of the United States, but would prevent delays and other inconveniences, which must arise from two houses meeting to consult and dispose of a vessel and cargo.

As the brokers or money-lenders were pleased to insist upon my signature to all the obligations, I was obliged to make a tour to Amsterdam for that purpose, and happened to enter the city the day after the first riots, which continued two nights while I was there. The proceedings of the Prince of Orange have at last brought on a crisis; and the English are holding out an appearance as if they thought it possible they might be obliged to take a part in it. If no foreign power interferes, the patriotic party is so much stronger than the other, that I think the prince must give way in the principal points in controversy. If any one foreign power interferes, many others must follow the example. This being well known, and France and England weary of war for the present, I hope the Dutch will be left alone to settle their own disputes.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

THOMAS PINCKNEY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Charleston, 10 July, 1787.

SIR, — I embrace the earliest opportunity of acknowledging your Excellency's favors of the 21st of April by Mr. Miller, and of the 22d of the same month by Mr. Heyward, which were yesterday handed to me. The intelligence they contain of

attempts to counterfeit our paper currency in Great Britain, will, I hope, by putting us on our guard, enable us to repel the threatened mischief.

At the same time that I express the high sense with which I am impressed of your Excellency's attention to the welfare of this State, give me leave to entreat a continuance of that vigilance and exertion hitherto manifested in this business; and, as it may be essential to the success of our endeavors to oppose the evil in its first stage, that some expense should be incurred in employing proper persons to detect and counteract the intended fraud, in procuring intelligence, and in rewarding those whose services may merit it, I will readily answer your Excellency's drafts for disbursements on this account, to the amount of £300 sterling. The recess of our legislature constrains me to be thus limited in a business wherein I think expense should not be spared.

We are looking forward with anxious expectation to the result of the deliberations of the federal convention now sitting at Philadelphia. Your Excellency's Defence of the Constitutions arrived in time to be of utility.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Thomas Pinckney.

P. S. If any counterfeit bills should come into your Excellency's possession, it will be of essential service to have them immediately transmitted.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 17 July, 1787.

Dear Sir, — I have been duly honored with yours of the 10th instant, and am happy to hear of the success of your journey to Amsterdam. There can be no doubt of its ratification by congress. Would to heaven they would authorize you to take measures for transferring the debt of this country to Holland before you leave Europe; most especially is it necessary to get rid of the debt to the officers. Their connections at court are such as to excite very unfavorable feelings there

against us, and some very hard things have been said (particularly in the *assemblée des notables*) on the prospects relative to our debts. The payment of the interest to the officers would have kept them quiet; but there are two years now due to them. I dare not draw for it without instructions; because, in the instances in which I have hitherto ventured to act uninstructed, I have never been able to know whether they have been approved in the private sentiments of the members of congress, much less by any vote. I have pressed on them the expediency of transferring the French debt to Holland, in order to remove every thing which might excite irritations between us and this nation. I wish it may be done before this ministry may receive ill impressions of us; they are at present very well disposed. I send you, by Mr. Appleton, some pamphlets; and have the honor to be, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

THE TREASURY BOARD TO JOHN ADAMS.

Board of Treasury, 25 July, 1787.

SIR, — We are favored with your letter of the 8th of May last, transmitting protests for non-acceptance of the two bills of exchange for 75,000 florins drawn by Constable, Rucker & Co. of New York, by their partner, Mr. John Rucker of London. From the solidity of the house by whom the bill was drawn (being in partnership with Mr. Robert Morris of Philadelphia), we had not the most distant apprehension of any disappointment on this remittance; you may, therefore, judge of our surprise and mortification when, previous to the receipt of your letter, we heard of Mr. Rucker's arrival in this city. It gives us pleasure to inform you that this gentleman is returned, by direction of Mr. Morris, to take up the bills drawn on him; and that we have the fullest assurance from the house, that effectual measures will be adopted for paying the bills remitted to you when they become due. We are glad you changed your first intentions of transmitting the original bills; you will be pleased to have them presented for payment when at maturity.

Your communications to congress on the subject of the loan you have effected, in consequence of this and other circum-

stances, for one million of florins, having been referred to this Board, we have agreed on a report, approving of the same, and recommending an immediate ratification; as soon as the determination of congress is made known to us, you shall be acquainted with the result.

We have the honor to be, &c.

SAMUEL OSGOOD,
ARTHUR LEE.

JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 25 July, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR, — It gives me pain to have occasion so often to repeat that the irregular attendance of the members of congress has, for a long time past, prevented their paying a seasonable attention to their foreign affairs; for there have been very few, and those very short intervals, in which nine States were represented in congress this year.

Hence, and from some other affairs deemed more pressing, it has happened that you have been so long kept in suspense on the subject of your public letter of the 24th, and your private one of the 25th, January last. I have regretted that suspense the more, as it might have created in your mind some doubts of my attention. I wished to write to you that the business was *done*, rather than that I would endeavor to get it done. The probability of this, which, from time to time, flattered and disappointed me, led me on to omit one opportunity after another, in expectation of being able to write satisfactorily by the next. There are now nine States in congress, and I am assured that the necessary acts and instructions shall be despatched in season to accompany this letter by the packet.

Your experience in affairs, your knowledge of characters, and your intimate acquaintance with the concerns and interests of this country, together with other circumstances and considerations, induce me to wish that all questions between us and the Court of London, as well as other affairs in Europe, could be arranged and adjusted before you leave it. The manner, however, in which you mention your intention to return, is decisive; and as the prospect of your doing much good here is fair and

promising, perhaps it may upon the whole be best that you should be with us, especially considering the actual situation of our affairs. You have, my good friend, deserved well of your country; and your services and character will be truly estimated, at least by posterity, for they will know more of you than the people of this day.

I have collected your public letters and despatches, and a good clerk has already recorded a large volume of them. It is common, you know, in the course of time, for loose and detached papers to be lost, or mislaid, or misplaced. It is to papers in this office that future historians must recur for accurate accounts of many interesting affairs respecting the late revolution; it is best, therefore, that they should be recorded regularly in books; and, although it will take much time and labor, which some may think unnecessary, I shall nevertheless persevere in the work.

Your book circulates and does good. It conveys much information on a subject with which we cannot be too intimately acquainted, especially at this period, when the defects of our national government are under consideration, and when the strongest arguments are necessary to remove prejudices and to correct errors, which, in many instances, design unites with ignorance to create, diffuse, and confirm. If, after all that we have seen and done and experienced in public life, we should yet live to see our country contentedly enjoying the sweets of peace, liberty, and safety, under the protection of wise laws and a well-constructed steady government, we shall have reason to rejoice that we have devoted so many years to her service.

Be assured of my constant esteem; and believe me, &c.

John Jay.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 25 August, 1787.

Dear Sir, — On my return from an excursion to Devonshire with my family, where we have been to fly from the putrefaction of a great city in the summer heats, I had the pleasure to find your favors of the 17th and 23d July.

A million of guilders are borrowed on a new loan in Holland; and I went over lately to subscribe the obligations, a punctilio which the brokers were pleased to think indispensable, to gratify the fancies of the money-lenders. But, as I had no fresh authority from congress, nor any particular new instructions, I have been and am still under serious apprehensions of its meeting with obstacles in the way of its ratification. If it is ratified, congress may, if they please, pay the interest, and principal too, out of it, to the French officers. I presume that if M. Grand should refuse your usual drafts for your salary, Messrs. Willink and Van Staphorst will honor them to the amount of yours and Mr. Short's salaries without any other interposition than your letter; but if they should make any difficulty, and if it should be in my power to remove it, you may well suppose I shall not be wanting. To be explicit, I will either advise or order the money to be paid upon your draft, as may be necessary, so that I pray you to make your mind perfectly easy on that score.

Mr. Barclay, I agree with you, took the wisest course when he embarked for America, though it will lay me under difficulties in settling my affairs finally with congress.

The French debt, and all the domestic debt of the United States, might be transferred to Holland, if it were judged necessary or profitable, and the congress or convention would take two or three preparatory steps. All the perplexities, confusions, and distresses in America arise, not from defects in their constitution or confederation, not from a want of honor or virtue, so much as from downright ignorance of the nature of coin, credit, and circulation. While an annual interest of twenty, thirty, and even fifty per cent. can be made, and a hope of augmenting capitals in a proportion of five hundred per cent. is opened by speculations in the stocks, commerce will not thrive. Such a state of things would annihilate the commerce, and overturn the government, too, in any nation in Europe.

I will endeavor to send you a copy, with this letter, of the second volume of the "Defence." If Frouillé, the bookseller, has a mind to translate it, he may; but it may not strike others as it does Americans. Three editions of the first volume have been printed in America. The second volume contains three long courses of experiments in political philosophy. Every trial

was intended and contrived to determine the question whether Mr. Turgot's system would do. The result you may read. It has cost me a good deal of trouble and expense to search into Italian ruins and rubbish, but enough of pure gold and marble has been found to reward the pains. I shall be suspected of writing romances to expose Mr. Turgot's system; but I assure you it is all genuine history. The vast subject of confederations remains; but I have neither head, hands, heart, eyes, books, nor time to engage in it; besides, it ought not to be so hasty a performance as the two volumes already ventured before the public.

With perfect esteem, your sincere friend,

John Adams.

THE CHEVALIER DE PINTO TO JOHN ADAMS.

London, 7 September, 1787.

(*Translation.*)

Sir, — I have received orders from my Court to inform you that, notwithstanding no answer has hitherto been made to the project of a commercial treaty, which we conferred about in London, nevertheless, sir, the inclinations of her most Faithful Majesty are not less ardent, nor less disposed to conclude this same treaty with the United States of America on suitable terms and conditions. And I am, moreover, directed to add, sir, that my Court will not delay to give you the most convincing and immediate proofs thereof.

I am desired, at the same time, to observe to you, that it would be very useful and suitable to appoint ministers as soon as possible on the part of the two powers; and my Court expressly orders me to endeavor to arrange this important point with you, sir, and to agree definitively on the character these ministers are to bear in their missions. It is essential to inform, on this head, that it will be necessary to fix (at least) on the title of resident minister, on account of reception at the Court of Lisbon, which is never granted either to simple agents or to consuls-general; and as soon as this point shall be fixed, I have orders to assure you, sir, that the Court of Lisbon will lose no

time to appoint, and send to America, the person that shall be chosen to reside with the congress of the United States.

I have the honor of being, &c.

Le Chevalier De Pinto.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE PINTO.

Grosvenor Square, 10 September, 1787.

Sir, — I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 7th of this month, and have observed, with great satisfaction, the assurances of her Most Faithful Majesty's desire to conclude with the United States of America a treaty of commerce upon convenient conditions.

I am very well convinced, sir, of the utility and convenience which would be found in the nomination of ministers between the two powers; and if it depended upon me, I flatter myself there would be no difficulty in concerting with your Excellency both that important point, and the character those ministers should bear in their missions. But as I have neither instructions nor authority from my sovereign to justify me in entering into such negotiations, I can only transmit to congress copies of your Excellency's letter and of my answer. This I shall have the honor to do, the first opportunity. The earnest desire of the citizens of the United States of America to show their respect for her Most Faithful Majesty, to live in perfect friendship with all her Majesty's dominions, will undoubtedly induce congress to transmit, as soon as possible, their answer to her Majesty's friendly proposition.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 18 September, 1787.

My Dear Friend, — I am very sorry to find that you leave Europe, before I have the pleasure to take you by the hand. Let me, at least, enjoy the satisfaction to wish you and your family a most happy voyage, and to anticipate your feelings on your touching the blessed shores of liberty, and entering our

good town of Boston. Be so kind as to remember me very affectionately to all friends. I am sorry I have not yet the printed journals of the assembly of Auvergne, which would at once satisfy you on the objects of your inquiries; but they shall be sent to Boston by the next opportunity. I once more give you joy on your prospect to see, before long, a country, to the liberty and prosperity of which you have so much contributed, and which, in welcoming you, will at once acknowledge place, fortune, and future obligations.

With most sincere affection and regard,

Yours,

LAFAYETTE.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 22 September, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — There was, yesterday, in the river, an impress of seamen, and several American vessels had their men taken from them. An application was made to me, this morning, by a master of a ship from New York, and I instantly wrote the inclosed letter to Lord Carmarthen, and went in person to Whitehall to deliver it. His Lordship read the letter and the representation to me from the captain, and, after some conversation on the subject, assured me that he would take measures to have the men restored, and precautions against such mistakes in future. This opportunity was a favorable one for some communication of sentiments upon the present posture of affairs, and his Lordship was invited to talk upon the subject by several questions which were proposed to him. His Lordship's answers were civil enough. "He hoped there would not be war; he should be very sorry for a war," &c. &c. But nothing was to be learned from him, if he knew any thing. One fact, indeed, his Lordship assured me of, namely, — that war is, in truth, declared by the Porte against Russia; that the Count De Montmorin had sent him an extract of a despatch of Monsieur de Choiseul, the French ambassador at Constantinople, containing an account of it; and that the French ministry had done him the justice to believe that the English ambassador and ministry had done nothing to excite this declaration. His Lordship's last despatches from Constantinople

assured him of every appearance of peace; so that the declaration must have been some sudden emotion of the Mufti or Janissaries, &c. It is easy to believe that the English did not excite the Turks to declare, for that step excuses France from any obligation to aid the Porte.

The present conjuncture appears the most critical and important in Europe, of any that has ever happened in our times. Mankind seem impatient under the yoke of servitude that has been imposed upon them, and disposed to compel their governors to make the burden lighter. But the wars that now threaten have no tendency that way, or but a remote one; and what dependence can be placed upon the common people in any part of Europe?

Upon my return home, another American master of a vessel, from Alexandria, in Virginia, came with his complaint that the press-gang had taken all his men. I will demand every man, as fast as I shall be informed of his being pressed; but I am much afraid of pretences, excuses, &c. &c. I expect to hear that one sailor is Irish, another Scotch, and a third English. All in my power, however, shall be done, and you shall be informed of the result.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO JOHN JAY.

(*Private.*)

London, 22 September, 1787.

Dear Sir, — Your private letter of the 25th of July is very friendly and obliging, as usual. Give yourself no concern about my apprehensions of your want of attention. I know too well your constant and assiduous application to the duties of your public offices, as well as to the just concerns of your private friends, ever to suspect your failing in either.

I shudder when I think of your next volume of my despatches. I shall appear before posterity in a very negligent dress and disordered air. In truth, I write too much to write well, and have never time to correct any thing. Your plan, however, of recording all the despatches of the foreign ministers, is indispensable. Future negotiations will often make it

necessary to look back to the past, besides the importance of public history. The true idea of the negotiation with Holland, particularly, will never be formed without attending to three sorts of measures; those taken with the Stadtholder and his party, those taken with the aristocratical people in the regencies, and those taken with the popular party. If any one of these had been omitted, that unanimity could never have been effected, without which the United States could not have been acknowledged, nor their minister admitted.

By obtaining from congress a letter of credence to the Prince of Orange, a measure that the patriots did not like, his party were softened; and by the inclosed letters to Mr. Calkoen, two very important burgomasters of Amsterdam, his intimate friends, and many others of the aristocratics, were kept steady. I had not time to transmit copies of those letters to congress in the season of them, but they ought to be put upon the files or records of congress. I do myself the honor to transmit you a copy for yourself, and another for congress.

Whether it would be in my power to do most service in Europe or at home, or any at all in either situation, I know not. My determination to go home was founded in a fixed opinion that neither the honor of congress nor my own, nor the interest of either, could be promoted by the residence of a minister here, without a British minister at congress; and in that opinion I am still clear. If my poor book does any good, I am happy. Another volume will reach you before this letter. In the calm retreat of Penn's hill, I may have leisure to write another; but if I should venture to throw together any thoughts or materials on the great subject of our confederation, I shall not dare to do it in such haste as the second volume, already printed, has been done in.

The convention of Philadelphia is composed of heroes, sages, and demigods, to be sure, who want no assistance from me in forming the best possible plan; but they may have occasion for underlaborers, to make it accepted by the people, or, at least, to make them unanimous in it and contented with it. One of these underworkmen, in a cool retreat, it shall be my ambition to become. With invariable esteem and affection,

I am, sir,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

Grosvenor Square, 22 September, 1787.

My Lord, — I do myself the honor to inclose to your Lordship a letter this moment received from the master of a vessel belonging to the United States of America. His name is John Douglass, commander of the ship Four Friends, American built, and the property of Andrew Van Tuyl, merchant, of New York. He informs me that, as two of his people were going on shore for provisions for the day, they were seized by the pressgang and forced on board his Majesty's brig Dispatch, then lying at Execution dock; that the gang then came on board his vessel and attempted to open his hatches, when his chief mate opposed them, and informed the officers that they were American citizens; that, although the officers of the pressgang then went away, there is reason to believe that another disagreeable visit will be made before morning, which will distress him exceedingly, as his ship is completed for sea and bound for New York.

The names of the two men pressed are Joseph Cowley, a native of the city of New York; the other is a negro man, called Primus, the property of Mr. Andrew Van Tuyl, merchant, of New York, but a native of the city.

It is my duty, my Lord, to make this representation to his Majesty's ministers, and to request that orders may be given for the restoration of these men to the master of their vessel, and further propose to your Lordship's consideration whether it be not expedient that some general order should be given, upon this occasion, to the officers of his Majesty's navy, to give a particular attention to American vessels and seamen, lest perplexities and inconveniences of this kind should be multiplied.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 23 September, 1787.

Dear Sir, — The accounts from Holland and France are very discouraging; so much so, that it would be imprudent to

enter into a detail of evils that are inevitable. The republic of Holland is in the utmost danger of being extinct; and, if the old forms are hereafter preserved, the prince will be so much master in reality, that the friends of liberty must be very unhappy, and live in continual disgrace and danger. The English are arming, with all the affectation of spirit and firmness, and France neither moves nor negotiates with the least appearance of fortitude or understanding. To do the former justice, they have had the prudence to send, both to Versailles and the Hague, men of sense and business. England will rise in consideration and power, and France will fall in the eyes of all Europe; this will make the former overbearing and her people insolent, and France will soon, in my poor opinion at least, be obliged to go to war, or sink very low. The United States of America, instead of being more courted by the English, as they would probably be in case of a war, will rather be more neglected, perhaps treated cavalierly. It is easy to see, however, that the peace cannot continue long between the two European nations. The philosophical visions of perpetual peace, and the religious reveries of a near approach of the millennium, in which all nations are to turn the weapons of war into implements of husbandry, will, in a few years, be dissipated. The armaments, now making in England, will disarrange Mr. Pitt's boasted plans of economy; and, in short, there is every appearance that the peace of Europe will be for years but an armed truce. The surplus of revenue, so ostentatiously displayed to the public, is but an artful deception. Oh fortunate Americans, if you did but know your own felicity! Instead of trampling on the laws, the rights, the generous plans of power delivered down from your remote forefathers, you should cherish and fortify those noble institutions with filial and religious reverence. Instead of envying the rights of others, every American citizen has cause to rejoice in his own. Instead of violating the security of property, it should be considered as sacred as the commandment, "thou shalt not steal." Instead of trampling on private honor and public justice, every one who attempts it should be considered as an impious parricide, who seeks to destroy his own liberty and that of his neighbors. What would have become of American liberty, if there had not been more faith, honor, and justice in the minds

of their common citizens, than are found in the common people in Europe? Do we see in the Austrian Netherlands, in the United Netherlands, or even in the parliaments in France, that confidence in one another, and in the common people, which enabled the people of the United States to go through a revolution? Where is the difference? It is a want of honesty; and if the common people in America lose their integrity, they will soon set up tyrants of their own, or court a foreign one. Laws alone, and those political institutions which are the guardians of them, and a sacred administration of justice, can preserve honor, virtue, and integrity in the minds of men.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF CARMARTHEN.

London, 3 October, 1787.

MY LORD, — It is with concern that I do myself the honor to inclose to your Lordship a letter which I received this morning from Charles Baldwin, a citizen of the United States of America, who represents that, on the 22d of last month, he was involuntarily taken out of the ship Favorite, Henry Cooper commander, belonging to New York, by a pressgang, and taken, without any of his property but the clothes he had on, and sent on board the Dispatch, tender, where he remained till next day, when he was sent on board the Vestal, frigate, at Long Reach, which, two days afterwards, sailed for Sheerness. When arrived there, he was sent on board the Conqueror, guard-ship; he remained there one day, and was then sent on board the Scipio, of 64 guns, which sailed the next day for Spithead. This letter is dated on board the Triumph, of 74 guns, at Spithead, under the command of Lord Hood, where, probably, this Charles Baldwin (whose father and family are well known to the secretary of legation of the United States) now is.

According to his representation, there are six or seven others, American citizens, on board the same ship in similar circumstances.

It is my duty, my Lord, to remonstrate against this practice,

which has been too common, of impressing American citizens, and especially with the aggravating circumstances of going on board American vessels, which ought to be protected by the flag of their sovereign.

It is my duty, also, to request your Lordship's interposition, to obtain for this person and his companions their liberty.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 12 October, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Amidst the bustling of interior and foreign affairs, I am glad to find an opportunity to remind you of me, which may be free from the rogueries of English and French post-offices. I have been some time in Auvergne, attending a preliminary assembly in that my province, the journal of which I have once directed and am now again sending to you, although it contains nothing interesting. My stay in Paris is but short, and I am returning again to Auvergne for five weeks. Letters that would arrive after the 23d instant, and before the 15th of December, could not probably be delivered into my hands.

A new regulation had been framed to fix the functions of the assemblies, and those of the intendants. It had also been directed that the printing of our journals be submitted to certain formalities. Complaints have been made about all that; and we are going to obtain conditions much more favorable.

The affairs of this country, considered in a constitutional light, are mending fast. The minds of the nation have made a great progress. Opposition is not, of course, free from party spirit. Many things are done or said, which are not much to the purpose; but while desultory expeditions are rambling about, the main body moves slowly on the right road. This country will, within twelve or fifteen years, come to a pretty good constitution, the best perhaps that can be framed, but one. May *that one*, the only one truly consistent with the dignity of man, be forever the happy lot of the sons of America! But I think a representation will be obtained in France, much better than the one now existing in England.

You know as much of the present politics, and even more, than I do. I cannot bear the thought of the late transactions in Holland. This ministry have been most completely taken in; deceived also they have been with respect to Ottoman affairs. I am afraid England will cheat them too, under the appearance of negotiations. We are, however, making ready for war, and as the prime minister is a man of genius, and of very brilliant as well as sound parts, I think that, if once launched, he will act vigorously. He can borrow money. The only thing is to know on what conditions; but it matters not with respect to the operations. And the more they will afterwards want taxes, the sooner we get a national assembly.

I have been thinking what our trans-Atlantic country ought to do, in case there is a war. To take a part in it, is very brilliant, but, in my humble opinion, ought not to be the plan. America may favor her allies as far as a friendly, helping neutrality can go, but not farther. Circumstanced as she is, a war would lay her under great expense with little profit. Such a neutrality as I point out to myself, will be beneficial to her. But it appears to me that will be time to insist with England for a restoration of the forts. Should they make war with France, it seems to me that they cannot, for the sake of those forts, risk to quarrel with the United States.

I hear that the convention have finished their business, but do not know the result, and am very anxiously waiting.

Adieu, my dear sir; my best respects wait on Mrs. Adams and the rest of the family. Madame de Lafayette is still in the country. Most affectionately and respectfully

Yours,

Lafayette.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 28 October, 1787.

Dear Sir, — Mr. Daniel Parker will have the honor to deliver you this. He is an intelligent American, and as well-informed as any you will see from hence. I beg leave to introduce him to you. Let me thank you for your late letter, and the important state papers inclosed in it.

I have ordered to your address a dozen copies of my *Boudoir* for the Marquis, who desired Mr. Appleton and Mr. Paine to have them sent. I have called it a Defence of the American Constitutions, because it is a resistance to an attack of M. Turgot. The two volumes are confined to one point; and if a city is defended from an attack made on the north gate, it may be called a defence of the city, although the other three gates, — the east, west, and south, — were so weak as to have been defenceless, if they had been attacked. If a warrior should arise to attack our constitutions where they are not defensible, I will not undertake to defend them. Two thirds of our States have made constitutions in no respects better than those of the Italian republics; and, as sure as there is a heaven and an earth, if they are not altered, they will produce disorders and confusion.

I can tell you nothing of politics. All the world is astonished at the secrecy of Mr. Pitt; great preparations for war, yet the world can find no enemy nor object. Carmarthen "hopes the scud will blow over, and even that the quarrel between the Porte and Russia will be made up. While a fire is burning in any quarter of Europe, no one can tell when or where it may spread."

The general understanding is that the United States are to be let alone; and they have given general orders to the navy to let American vessels and seamen alone. They will have their hands full, I believe, and there is little plunder to be made of Americans; so that we may be quiet as long as they will let us. But our countrymen will do well to think of the possibility of danger, and of the means of defence. A war would cost us more than we have of cash or credit; but if we should be attacked, we must defend, money or no money, credit or no credit. Whether John Bull has command enough of his passions to see us punctually fulfil our treaties as we must do, without being transported with rage, you, who know him, can tell as well as I. We know this gentleman's hasty temper so well, that I think we may very safely wish for the continuance of peace between France and him, even upon selfish principles; though our commerce and navigation would be greatly promoted by a war, if we can keep out of it.

I tremble and agonize for the suffering patriots in Holland.

You may judge to what lengths the spirit extends against them, by a formal complaint of their High Mightinesses against Dumas, and a requisition to me to employ him no longer, but to appoint some other person in my absence. It is not, I am well persuaded, as agent for the United States, but as a friend of France, or of the patriotic party against the stadtholder, that he has incurred this censure and displeasure. Yet, as Mr. Dumas holds not his character or authority from me, I can do nothing but transmit the papers to congress.

Yours, &c.

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 15 November, 1787.

Dear Sir, — The attack upon Mr. Dumas is but a part of that system of intimidation that the present triumphant party in Holland is pursuing; and if one were to conjecture, it would be plausible to suppose that Sir James Harris was the instigator of it.

The English Court and nation, with all their affected contempt and rude execrations of the Dutch, have at bottom a very great opinion of the importance of that power in the balance between England and the House of Bourbon. Hints have been several times thrown out in the English papers of the partiality of the American minister at the Hague to France; and as Mr. Dumas was supposed to be under my direction, his motions have been imputed to me. Mr. Dumas has a pension from France, reversible to his daughter. It would be better for congress to pay this pension, at the expense of the United States, or to dismiss him from their service, paying him, however, during his life, his annual allowance, than to have a person in their service in the pay of two powers at once. If an English ambassador, or *chargé d'affaires*, or agent, at the Hague, should receive from France a pension for opposing the interests of the United States, congress would have some cause to be uneasy. I am not at all surprised, therefore, at the attack upon Mr. Dumas, yet I should be very sorry if it should prevail against him; and, therefore, it is to be hoped that congress will

take time to deliberate upon the subject. As there has been no formal deliberation of their High Mightinesses upon my memorial, and as the correspondence has been hitherto only between Mr. Fagel and me,—although their High Mightinesses have been acquainted with it, and have directed it on the part of Mr. Fagel,—yet congress are not obliged formally to answer it. Sovereign to sovereign, and minister to minister, is the diplomatic maxim; congress, therefore, may take as long time as they please to deliberate, and it is hoped they will take so much, that the present passions may cool, and the present scene be shifted. After another year, or six or nine months, circumstances may be very different.

If we were to judge, by the tone of arrogance at present in Holland, we should conclude that they would infallibly blow up a war between England and France, and join the former. But this, to me, at least, is very doubtful. Notwithstanding the complaint against Mr. Dumas, and the recall of Mr. Van Berckel, if that should be agreed to, you will not find any hostile disposition towards the United States. If France remains quiet, as she ought at present, for it is now too late for her to move, all nations and parties will sit down satisfied with the restoration of the Stadtholder for some years, and there will be no formal rupture with France or America. England has blustered, and France has slept; but the former has, at heart, no inclination for war. Fifty millions of debt, added to the present, would produce a tornado in this country, the consequences of which cannot be computed. England, Holland, and Prussia will be very glad to remain as they are, and France shows no disposition to disturb them.

As I take all the late transactions to have been merely a system of intimidation, you will not hear of those rigorous prosecutions and cruel punishments of the patriots in Holland, which are held out in terror; neutrality, eternal neutrality, will still be the passion and politics in the United Provinces, both of Stadtholderians and patriots. There are no warlike characters among them, and the present dominant party will be as anxious as their adversaries to avoid every provocation to a war, either with France or England. William V. is neither the politician nor the warrior that William III. was. An appearance of spirit, and even of arrogance, has been assumed in the Nether-

lands, as well as in England, merely to overawe, and upon the secret presumption that they should not be forced into a war in earnest. This policy has succeeded so well, that I cannot help suspecting there were better grounds for it than the world in general were acquainted with. I know that the patriots in Holland, some of them at least, as long ago as when Mr. Rayneval made his curious journey into that country, suspected that their ideas of liberty were not to be supported, and accordingly thought very seriously of emigrating to America. I do not mean, however, by this, the casuistical characters. Money is, however, so much better understood, and more beloved, than liberty, that you will not hear of many emigrations. The friends of France affect to speak slightly of Holland at present, and of her weight in the scale. This is necessary to excuse their inattention and blunders on the late occasion; but France never committed a greater error in policy than she has done by her unskilful negotiations at Berlin, the Hague, and London, since the peace. If Holland should be forced into a renovation of her connections with England, America, in my opinion, will have reason to regret it; for I have not a doubt that England, Holland, and Prussia would get the better in a war against the house of Bourbon, and America will be obliged to join the latter in self-defence; for, after having humbled France, England would not scruple to attack the United States. That our country may act with dignity in all events, that she may not be obliged to join in any war without the clearest conviction of the justice of the cause, and her own honor and real interest, it is indispensably necessary that she should act the part, in Holland, of perfect independence and honest impartiality between the different Courts and nations who are now struggling for her friendship, and who are all, at present, our friends. This has ever appeared to me so clear and obvious, that I never could approve the conduct of M. Dumas, or Messieurs Van Staphorst, in taking so decided a part in favor of France and against the Stadtholder, although I fully believe they followed the judgments of their understandings, and the inclinations of their hearts, with integrity and honor.

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

London, 30 November, 1787.

Dear Sir, — I do myself the honor to inclose the King's speech at the opening of Parliament, as it has been transmitted to me from the Marquis of Carmarthen; and the Morning Chronicle, of the 28th, which contains, not the debates, for there were none, but the panegyrics upon it.

I have long seen, sir, in silent astonishment and grief, the negligent and imprudent conduct of a deceased French minister of foreign affairs, in his negotiations and intercourse in Holland, the despicable history of a Maillebois, the unmeaning or ill-meaning intrigues of Rayneval, the Rhingrave, not to mention others, equally disgusting, at Paris, with a minister, whom you know. When I first knew or suspected that the Dutch patriots and their confidential agents had surrendered themselves to female intrigues, I had a thousand apprehensions that they would finally meet with that ruin which you perfectly well know would have been the devoted fate of the United States, if they had submitted to Mr. Deane's system of de Maillebois and du Coudrays, ten years ago. Let me entreat gentlemen to compare what remains upon the records or files of congress at that period, with what happened before and at the peace, with what has taken place in Holland, and thank heaven for their providential escapes.

There are many worthy characters, now exiles from Holland, and refugees in Germany, the Austrian Netherlands, and France, for whom I have many years entertained an esteem and affection, whose melancholy situation is truly deplorable. These, however, have ever appeared to me to be too inattentive to the sense of the common people in their own country, too little acquainted with the nature of government, and too confidently dependent on the support of France.

The orations in parliament, upon the speech inclosed, are, however, more extraordinary than any thing that has occurred.

The interposition of Prussia in the affairs of Holland cannot be justified upon the principles of the law of nations; and, if truth and justice are not lost out of the world, will be marked by the impartial, both in the present and in future ages, with

severe censure. But the speeches of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt appear to me to have set every tie that can bind mankind, every principle which ought to be held sacred, at open defiance. It is openly avowed by both that a treaty of alliance is in agitation between England and Holland at this moment, when a treaty, recently made between France and Holland, is in full force, and when there is no pretence of a violation of it. Is not this a most outrageous insult, in the face of the whole world, — for the debates in parliament are known to be published all over Europe, — upon the law of nations, upon the faith of treaties and national honor? Is it the intention of the speech, and of the address, which will echo it back to the throne, to force the house of Bourbon into a war? To me it seems manifest. If France should bear it patiently, what are we to think? The fermentation in that kingdom, occasioned by the ruin brought upon it by that administration, of whose merits you have long since formed an accurate judgment, and, by the exertions to obtain provincial and national assemblies, threatens much confusion. It is not possible to foresee what the effect will be. I own myself afraid that the patriots in France will prove as unskilful and unsuccessful asserters of a free government, as those in Holland have been. A tedious relaxation, if not the most serious divisions, is to be apprehended; if, however, the house of Bourbon is unable to assert her dignity upon this occasion, I am clearly convinced that the pride and arrogance of England will rise so high as to demand the demolition of Cherbourg, and attempt to sever South America from Spain. Nor will this be all. She will demand the annihilation of several articles, at least, of the treaties between France and the United States of America. Nor will they stop here. If they can bind Holland in their shackles, and France, by her internal distractions, is unable to interfere, she will make war immediately against us. They are at present, both at court and in the nation at large, much more respectful to me, and much more tender of the United States, than they ever have been before; but, depend upon it, this will not last; they will aim at recovering back the western lands, at taking away our fisheries, and at the total ruin of our navigation, at least.

The United States of America, therefore, had never more

reason to be upon their guard; to complete their constitution of government; to unite as one man to meet, with courage and constancy, the severe trial which, in all probability, they will be called to undergo in a few years.

There is some room, however, to hope that Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox are outrunning the Dutchmen in their disposition for an alliance. The friendship of France appears to me to be so necessary to the King of Prussia, that I cannot yet believe that he will advise the Stadtholder to follow the English party so implicitly. The state of Europe at large is so confused, that there is not one politician in the world, that I can hear of, who pretends to foresee what turn affairs may take.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 6 December, 1787.

Dear Sir, — The project of a new constitution has objections against it, to which I find it difficult to reconcile myself; but I am so unfortunate as to differ somewhat from you in the articles, according to your last kind letter.[1]

You are afraid of the one, I, of the few. We agree perfectly that the many should have a full, fair, and perfect representation. You are apprehensive of monarchy, I, of aristocracy. I would, therefore, have given more power to the president, and less to the senate. The nomination and appointment to all offices, I would have given to the president, assisted only by a privy council of his own creation; but not a vote or voice would I have given to the senate or any senator unless he were of the privy council. Faction and distraction are the sure and certain consequence of giving to a senate, a vote in the distribution of offices. You are apprehensive that the president, when once chosen, will be chosen again and again as long as he lives. So much the better, as it appears to me. You are apprehensive of foreign interference, intrigue, and influence. So am I. But as often as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence renews. The less frequently they happen, the less danger; and if the same man may be chosen again, it is

[1] See this letter in the collection of Mr. Jefferson's writings, vol. ii. p. 266.

possible he will be, and the danger of foreign influence will be less. Foreigners, seeing little prospect, will have less courage for enterprise. Elections, my dear sir, to offices which are a great object of ambition, I look at with terror. Experiments of this kind have been so often tried, and so universally found productive of horrors, that there is great reason to dread them.

Mr. Littlepage, who will have the honor to deliver this, will tell you all the news. I am, &c. &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 10 December, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — I last night received the ratification of my last loan, and the inclosed resolutions of congress, of 18th July last, for the redemption of prisoners at Algiers. It is probable you have received it before; but, as it is in your department to execute it, and possible that you may not have received it, I thought it safest to transmit it to you, as I have now the honor to do, herein inclosed. Mr. Van Berckel, son of the minister, is arrived at Falmouth, by the packet, but not yet in London. By him, I expect my dismission. The American newspapers, already arrived, both from New York and Boston, announce it to have passed in congress the 5th of October; and now, as we say at sea, huzza for the new world, and farewell to the old one! All Europe resounds with projects for reviving states and assemblies, I think, and France is taking the lead. How such assemblies will mix with simple monarchies, is the question. The fermentation must terminate in improvements of various kinds. Superstition, bigotry, ignorance, imposture, tyranny, and misery must be lessened somewhat; but I fancy it will be found difficult to conduct and regulate these debates. *Ex quovis ligno, non fit mercurius.* The world will be entertained with noble sentiments and enchanting eloquence; but will not essential ideas be sometimes forgotten, in the anxious study of brilliant phrases? Will the Duke of Orleans make a sterling patriot, and a determined son of liberty? Will he rank, with posterity, among the Brutuses and Catos? Corrections and reformations and improvements are much wanted in all the institutions in Europe, ecclesiastical and civil; but how or

when they will be made, is not easy to guess. It would be folly, I think, to do no more than to try over again experiments that have been already a million times tried. Attempts to reconcile contradictions, will not succeed; and to think of reinstating republics, as absurdly constituted as were the most which the world has seen, would be to revive confusion and carnage, which must again end in despotism. I shall soon be out of the noise of all these speculations in Europe, leaving behind me, however, the most fervent good wishes for the safety and prosperity of all who have the cause of humanity, equity, equality, and liberty at heart. With the tenderest affection and friendship, I am, and ever shall be, my dear sir,

Yours,

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 16 December, 1787.

Dear Sir, — Two days ago, I received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 16th of October, with its inclosures.

The approbation of my conduct in Europe, expressed in the resolutions of congress of the 5th of October, does me honor, and demands my acknowledgments. The permission to return to America, and the termination of my commission in Holland, having removed all difficulties, it is my intention to embark, with my family, in the month of March. It would give me great pleasure, sir, to accept of your polite and friendly invitation to New York; but, as the health of my family is very tender, and their apprehensions of the sea very great, it will be necessary for me to embark for Boston. Mr. Smith and his family will embark for New York. As congress have not transmitted him any orders relative to another minister, or to a *chargé d'affaires*, at this Court, the presumption is that it is either the intention of congress to have no diplomatic character here, or that other persons are destined to fill it; in either case, Mr. Smith's road is as clear as mine to return home.

You have, before this time, received from Colonel Smith his own account of his journey, arrival, and reception in Portugal.

His reception was more flattering than could have been expected, and was in every respect, I presume, fully satisfactory to him. But the mission has been attended with consequences affecting his health, which, there is reason to fear, he will have cause to remember for some time. A bilious fever or tertian ague, contracted in Portugal or Spain, has left him in a delicate state of health, which, I fear, he will not fully remove till he arrives in America.

The public mind cannot be occupied about a nobler object than the proposed plan of government. It appears to be admirably calculated to cement all America in affection and interest, as one great nation. A result of accommodation and compromise cannot be supposed perfectly to coincide with every one's ideas of perfection. But, as all the great principles necessary to order, liberty, and safety, are respected in it, and provision is made for corrections and amendments, as they may be found necessary, I confess I hope to hear of its adoption by all the States.

Two days ago, a great consternation was spread in the stock exchange by a report of a quadruple alliance of the two empires with France and Spain. Whether this is any more than an artificial circulation, to turn the tide of popular terror and vapor, like the revived conversations about an invasion of England, I know not. France undoubtedly has the power to form alliances, if she will, which will bring the existence of Britain and Prussia into question. But the revival of states, general and provincial, and the contests which are likely to arise out of them, will give the French government business enough for some time.

Most perfectly do I agree with you, that America has nothing to fear but a want of union and a want of government. The United States now stand in an elevated situation, and they must and will be respected and courted, not only by France and England, but by all other powers of Europe, while they keep themselves neutral.

It is suspected by some that the additional troops, now recruiting for the army, are intended to be sent to Canada and Nova Scotia; their ostensible destination is to the West India Islands.

No answer is made to any of my memorials or letters to the

ministry, nor do I expect that any thing will be done while I stay. There are reports of an intention to send a minister to America; and a Mr. Liston, I think the name is, now at Madrid, is mentioned. But nothing has been said to me, upon that subject, for some time.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

London, 18 December, 1787.

DEAR SIR, — Last night I received your letter of the 12th. Mr. Jarvis and Commodore Jones are arrived here from New York; both charged with large despatches for you. Mr. Jarvis sent his packet on by Colonel Trumbull, who departed from hence to Paris last Thursday. Commodore Jones went off a day or two ago. But both will arrive to you before this letter. The papers they carry, with a renovation of your commission to the Court of Versailles, contain, I presume, orders and instructions about every thing in Holland.

As my dismission from the service arrived at the same time, not a word has been said to me. Nevertheless, *nil Americani alienum;* and I have the honor to agree with you in your opinion of the propriety of keeping good our credit in Holland. I should advise, therefore, that the interest on M. Fizeaux's loan at least should be paid, and the creditors requested to wait for their capital till further orders can be obtained from congress. If they will not consent to that, I would pay them principal and interest, provided there is money enough in the hands of our bankers, and neither you nor they have received contrary orders. No authorities from me will be necessary. Your own letter to Messrs. Willink and Van Staphorst will be sufficient; but if they make any difficulty, which I cannot conceive, for want of any orders from me, I will send them.

You have received authority to negotiate the redemption of our unfortunate countrymen in Algiers. To you, therefore, I send a petition which I received from them a few days ago.

Yours, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSRS. WILLINK AND OTHERS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Amsterdam, 25 December, 1787.

Being without any of your Excellency's esteemed favors unreplied to, the purport of the present is to acquaint you that, on the 22d instant, we received a letter from his Excellency Thomas Jefferson, minister from the United States at the Court of Versailles, notifying to us that Messrs. H. Fizeaux & Co., of this city, had applied to him for 51,000 florins to pay off so much borrowed by them for account of the United States, reimbursable the first proximo; punctuality in the discharge whereof, Mr. Jefferson conceiving to be highly interesting to the honor and credit of the United States, he presses us in the most energetic style to furnish the money, informing us he had wrote your Excellency to join in enforcing his warm solicitations. So that we expect to hear from your Excellency on the subject by the British mail, detained by contrary winds.

We sincerely regret the application has been so late that we are called to determine upon this matter without the necessary time to weigh its consequences with the requisite attention. Besides, we are deprived of any communications from the Board of Treasury respecting it, the official channel through which ought to issue the directions for payments of such a nature. This remissness on the part of the commissioners, even had we plenty of money of the United States, places us in the ever disagreeable predicament of assuming unnecessary responsibility. Wherefore, we request your Excellency to second our reiterated strong representations, to have greater punctuality shown us in future on similar occasions.

The funds we have in hand of the United States, will suffice to face the interest that will be payable by them the 1st February next, and leave a small surplus to discharge your and Mr. Jefferson's monthly drafts for a short time. Thus, the payment of the 51,000 florins would be an actual advance of our own cash, there being but little or no probability the bonds of the last loan for the United States will sell, while there are so many loans open here for different countries, whose governments are firmly established, and punctuality has been long experienced. Our zeal and wish to serve the United States

will, however, prompt us to do all that can be expected on the occasion; and we shall not fail giving you the earliest intelligence of our determination. In the mean time, we must entreat your Excellency to desist, for the present, from accepting any further drafts for account of the United States, and to confine your disposals of money to your personal wants, as we might otherwise be exposed to greater advances than the circumstances of the times incline us to. The disagreeableness this intimation is to us is greatly modified by our intimate persuasion that your Excellency's truly patriotic principles will induce your acquiescence, without reluctance, to any measure dictated by a regard for the honor and interest of your country.

We are, very respectfully,

WILHEM AND JAN WILLINK,
NIC. AND JACOB VAN STAPHORST.

TO M. FAGEL.

London, 25 January, 1788.

SIR, — The frequent civilities I have received from you have emboldened me to inclose to you a memorial to their High Mightinesses, and another to his Most Serene Highness, which I beg the favor of you to deliver. I hope there will not be judged to be any impropriety in this method of conveying these memorials, and that you will have the goodness to excuse the trouble of it.

I should have been happy to have had another opportunity of paying my respects to you, and of thanking you for all your politeness upon many and various occasions. I have signed two memorials to the States General; one in French, the other in my own native language, and the language of my country; you may deliver either of them, or both, at your discretion.

I am not critically skilled in French, and fear that the composition in that language will not be found elegant; but it expresses the sentiments of my heart, and therefore I hope it will be accepted.

Wishing every blessing to you and yours,

I am,

JOHN ADAMS.

MEMORIAL TO THE PRINCE OF ORANGE.

To his Most Serene Highness, William the Fifth, Prince of Orange and Nassau, hereditary Stadtholder, and Governor of the United Provinces of the Netherlands.

The subscriber, minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America, has the honor to acquaint his Most Serene Highness that the said United States, in congress assembled, have given him their permission to return to America after the 24th day of February, 1788, and have resolved that his mission to the republic of the United Netherlands should then determine. It is to him a mortifying circumstance that it is not in his power to go, in person, to the Hague, in order to take leave of their High Mightinesses, and of your Most Serene Highness. But as he had the honor to be originally accredited by congress to your Most Serene Highness, it is his duty, in taking leave of the republic, and on his departure from Europe, to pay his respects to your Most Serene Highness in writing.

He asks leave to express his thanks for all the civilities he has, from time to time, received at your Most Serene Highness's Court; and his sincere wishes for the universal felicity of the republic in general, of your Most Serene Highness, of your royal consort, and illustrious family.

Done at Grosvenor Square, in London, this 25th day of January, 1788.

John Adams.

MEMORIAL TO THE STATES GENERAL.

(*Translation.*)

To their High Mightinesses the Lords, the States General of the United Netherlands.

High and Mighty Lords, — The subscriber, minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America, has the honor to communicate to your High Mightinesses a resolution of the United States of America, in congress assembled, of the 5th

day of October, 1787, by which he is permitted, agreeably to his request, to return to America at any time after the 24th day of February, 1788, and by which his commission and credentials to your High Mightinesses are on that day to terminate.

Nothing would have been more agreeable to the inclinations of the subscriber than to have passed over to the Hague, in order to have paid his final respects, and to have taken leave of your High Mightinesses, had not the shortness of the time, the severity of the season, and the tender state of his health, been opposed to his wishes.

The magnanimity and wisdom with which your High Mightinesses, in 1782, manifested your friendship to the United States of America, contributed to accelerate the general peace of the world, which has lasted so long; and the candor and goodness of your High Mightinesses, and of the whole republic, to the subscriber, as well as to his country, have made impressions on his mind which neither time, place, nor circumstance, can ever efface.

In finishing his course in Europe, and in taking a respectful leave of your High Mightinesses, he begs leave to express his ardent wishes for the happiness and prosperity of your High Mightinesses and your families, and his sincere assurances that, in whatever country he may be, he shall never cease to pray for the liberty, the independence, and the universal happiness and prosperity of the whole republic of the United Netherlands.

Done at London, this twenty-fifth day of January, A. D. 1788.

John Adams.

H. FAGEL TO JOHN ADAMS.

(*Translation.*)

The Hague, 12 February, 1788.

Sir, — I have this day been honored with your letter, dated London, 25th January, of the present year, accompanied with a memorial to their High Mightinesses, and another to his Highness, with a request to deliver the same. I have ever

experienced so many proofs of your friendship and good will, that I should have accounted it an honor and pleasure immediately to have complied with your wishes, although I rather wished that you had not taken leave, and always entertained hopes to have seen you here once more. Permit me, however, to inform you that, when I communicated your letter, addressed to their High Mightinesses, to the President and other members, they did not put any unfavorable construction upon the memorial of taking leave, which, in every respect, was found obliging and satisfactory, excepting that no letter of recall from congress to their High Mightinesses accompanied the same, which is customary; for, as a minister is credited by a letter of credence (such an one as was received by their High Mightinesses on the 22d April, 1782, dated the 1st January, 1781), so, in like manner, a minister is recalled by a letter of recall, upon which a letter of recredence is returned. Perhaps this may have been occasioned by an omission of the secretary of congress, and this prevents my making use of your memorial, which ought to be delivered with a letter of recall from congress; and your Excellency will, I trust, not be displeased, that I find myself obliged to return to you the letter and memorial.

Your Excellency's affairs not permitting you to come and take a personal leave, it will be satisfactory that a letter of recall from congress be transmitted with your memorial.

It will ever give me pleasure to learn of your welfare, and those connected with you; and to find opportunities of giving you proofs of the particular regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

H. Fagel.

P. S. His Highness being in the same predicament with their High Mightinesses, nothing can be done but to wait for a letter of recall from congress.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

London, 12 February, 1788.

Dear Sir, — I have received your letter of the 6th, and had before received the same information from Amsterdam.

I know not how to express to you the sense I have of the disingenuousness of this plot. The difficulty of selling the obligations, I believe to be mere pretence; and, indeed, the whole appears to me to be a concerted fiction, in consequence of some contrivance or suggestion of Mr. Parker, the great speculator in American paper, who, though I love him very well, is too ingenious for me. I feel myself obliged to write this in confidence to you, and to put you on your guard against the ungovernable rage of speculation. I feel no vanity in saying that this project never would have been suggested, if it had not been known that I was recalled.

If I was to continue in Europe and in office, I would go to Amsterdam and open a new loan with John Hodshon before I would submit to it. The undertakers are bound, as I understand it, to furnish the money on the new loan. They agreed to this, upon condition that I would go to Amsterdam to sign the obligations. The truth is, that Messrs. Willink and Van Staphorst have been purchasing immense quantities of American paper, and they now want to have it acknowledged and paid in Europe. It appears to me totally impossible that you or I should ever agree to it, or approve it; and, as far as I can comprehend, it is equally impossible for the Board of Treasury or congress to consent to it. You and I, however, cannot answer for them; but I think we cannot countenance any hopes that they will ever comply with it. The continental certificates and their interest are to be paid in America at the treasury of the United States. If a precedent is set of paying them in Europe, I pretend not to sufficient foresight to predict the consequences; they appear, however, to me to be horrid. If the interest of one million of dollars is paid this year in Europe, you will find the interest of ten millions demanded next year. I am very sorry to be obliged, at this moment of my retirement, to give opinions which may be misrepresented and imputed to motives that my soul despises; but I cannot advise you, by any means, to countenance this project. But it is my serious opinion that the judgment of congress, or the Board of Treasury, ought to be waited for, at all hazards. If the brokers, undertakers, and money-lenders will take such advantages of us, it is high time to have done with them, pay what is due as fast as we can, but never contract another farthing of debt with them.

If a little firmness is shown in adhering to the resolution of waiting the orders of congress, it is my opinion care will be taken in Amsterdam that our credit shall not suffer. The interest of our commissioners, of the brokers, undertakers, and money-lenders, all conspire to induce them to prevent a failure.

But, in my judgment, a failure had better take place than this project. I shall not write with the same frankness to Willinks, but I shall give them my opinion that the judgment of congress must be waited for.

My dear friend, farewell, I pity you. In your situation, dunned and teazed as you will be, all your philosophy will be wanting to support you. But be not discouraged. I have been constantly vexed with such terrible complaints, and frightened with such long faces, these ten years. Depend upon it, the Amsterdamers love money too well to execute their threats. They expect to get too much by American credit, to destroy it.

I am,

John Adams.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 14 February, 1788.

Dear Sir, — I yesterday received Mr. Remsen's letter of the 14th of December, with the journals and gazettes inclosed.

At the last conference at Whitehall, which were last Thursday, Lord Carmarthen thought proper to express a wish that this country had some sort of treaty of commerce with the United States of America, that it might be no longer necessary to take new measures from time to time, which looked hard. This observation his Lordship made, alluding to Mr. Grenville's motion, in the house of commons, for making the regulation of the intercourse between America and the West India Islands perpetual. His Lordship then immediately said, "I presume, Mr. Adams, that the States will all immediately adopt the new constitution. I have read it with pleasure; it is very well drawn up." All this oracular utterance was to signify to me, what has all along been insinuated, that there is not as yet any national government; but that, as soon as there shall be one, the British

Court will vouchsafe to treat with it. You will see, by the Morning Chronicle of the 12th of February, inclosed, that Mr. Grenville's speech is in the same strain; so that we may conclude it to be the concerted language of the cabinet. It is unnecessary for me to make any reflections upon it; the argument that arises out of it, in favor of the new constitution and a prompt acceptance of it, is but one among many. France and Holland furnish as many reasons as England. Mr. Jefferson must soon follow my example, and return to America, if that constitution is not accepted by all the States; and what will be the consequence of the clamors of all the officers in France who are creditors, of all the notables who may be pleased to cast reflections, and of all our creditors in Holland, for want of payment of interest and principal as they become due, must be left to every American citizen seriously to consider.

In preparing for my departure, I have been personally treated with the same uniform tenor of dry decency and cold civility which appears to have been the premeditated plan from the beginning; and opposition, as well as administration, appear to have adopted the same spirit. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, Lord Camden and the Duke of Richmond, Lord Hawkesbury and Lord North and Lord Stormont have all behaved alike. If this country can make such arrangements, that the King of Prussia may make a diversion of the French forces by land, and the native Indians or discontented subjects, another, of those of Spain in South America, you may easily believe that England will be eager for war. Let not our countrymen flatter themselves that they shall be able to maintain peace. Lord Carmarthen, indeed, said to me, that he did not see a possibility of a misunderstanding in Europe, and that he even hoped that peace would be made between Russia and the Porte. His Lordship is in profound ignorance of it, I presume, if there is really any probability of an alliance of France with the Emperor or Empress; Mr. Jefferson has informed you of his conjectures, as well as his intelligence, on that point.

The Marquis de la Luzerne is now ambassador at this Court from France, and has already met with humiliations not easily borne by ambassadors. Monsieur de Calonne appears at the levee and drawing room, and even at the table of the Marquis

of Carmarthen, on the Queen's birth day, with the French ambassador. The Chevalier de Ternant was presented by the French ambassador to the King and Queen, and treated with the most marked disgust by both. These things are hard to bear. I have had some conversation with this minister, with whom I made a voyage, in 1779, from L'Orient to Boston, in the Sensible, and could wish to have resided longer with him, for he will certainly be attentive and able; but my embarkation is fixed to the month of March, and I hope to be in Boston in May. With great esteem and regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

SECRETARY JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 14 February, 1788.

DEAR SIR, — As this letter will go by the way of Ireland, and may be exposed to accidents in the course of its route, I decline entering into particulars; but, as the long recess of congress, who are now again convened, makes it necessary that the inclosed letters of recall should be transmitted without delay, I think it best to send one set by this conveyance, and to forward duplicates by another vessel, which will sail about the last of the month for Bristol. Your letters by the packet are come to hand, and shall be particularly noticed in my next, which will go under cover to a friend, with directions to him what to do with it in case you should have left England before its arrival. Massachusetts has adopted the proposed constitution by a majority of nineteen. I am, dear sir, &c.

JOHN JAY.

(*Inclosed.*)

By the United States, in Congress assembled, October 5th, 1787.

ON a report of the secretary of foreign affairs, to whom were referred two letters from the Honorable John Adams, of the 24th and 27th January last:

Resolved, That the Honorable John Adams, the minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of London, be permitted, agreeably to his request, to return to America at

any time after the 24th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1788, and that his commission of minister plenipotentiary to their High Mightinesses do also then determine.

Resolved, That congress entertain a high sense of the services which Mr. Adams has rendered to the United States, in the execution of the various important trusts which they have from time to time committed to him; and that the thanks of congress be presented to him, for the patriotism, perseverance, integrity, and diligence with which he hath ably and faithfully served his country.

Charles Thomson, *Secretary.*

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 16 February, 1788.

Dear Sir, — There is no maxim more clearly settled in all courts, and in all negotiations between nations, than that sovereign should always speak to sovereign, and minister to minister. I am not at all surprised, therefore, although I am much mortified, at having my memorials to their High Mightinesses, and to his Most Serene Highness, returned to me, with the letter inclosed from Mr. Fagel. I should have had a letter of recall, signed by the president of congress, by their order, and addressed to their High Mightinesses. There is a similar irregularity in my recall from the British Court; for, although my commission is limited to three years, yet my letter of credence to his Majesty has no limits at all. If the omission of a letter from congress to the King, upon this occasion, should not be taken as an offence, it will not be because it is not observed; but from motives too humiliating to congress, as well as their minister here, to be explained.

There is no alternative now left for me; home I must go, and leave all Europe to conjecture that I have given offence in Holland; and, in England, that I have misbehaved abroad, though my conduct has been approved at home. When the public shall hear that I have gone home, without taking leave, there will be no end of criticism, conjectures, and reflections.

All that now remains for me is, humbly to request that con-

gress would be pleased to send me regular letters of recall, after my arrival in America, that I may then transmit my memorials to Europe, and take leave in form.

To a man who has taken the utmost pains to do his duty, and to fulfil every obligation to the smallest punctilio, nothing can be more disagreeable than such disappointments, especially as, in all my letters, I have so expressly and repeatedly requested regular letters of recall.

With great respect, &c.

John Adams.

T. JEFFERSON TO J. ADAMS.

Paris, 20 February, 1788.

Dear Sir, — I am in hopes daily of receiving a letter from you in answer to my last. The delay of the letters which contained the proposition to the Board of Treasury takes away all probability of their answering in time, and I foresee that I shall be closely pressed by circumstances on that point.

This letter will probably find you near your departure. I am in hopes it will be only a change of service, from helping us here to help us there. We have so few in our councils acquainted with foreign affairs, that your aid in that department, as well as others, will be invaluable. The season of the year makes me fear a very disagreeable passage for Mrs. Adams and yourself, though we have sometimes fine weather in these months. Nobody will pray more sincerely than myself for your passage, that it may be short, safe, and agreeable; that you may have a happy meeting with all your friends, be received by them with the gratitude you have merited at their hands, and placed in such a station as may be honorable to you and useful to them. Adieu, my dear sir, and accept assurances of the unchangeable esteem and respect with which I am

Your friend and servant,

Thomas Jefferson.

TO SECRETARY JAY.

Grosvenor Square, 21 February, 1788.

Dear Sir, — Yesterday I had my audience of leave of his Majesty. I shall not trouble you with any particulars of the previous steps to obtain this audience (which you know are always troublesome enough), nor with any detail of the conversation, farther than the public is immediately interested in it. The substance of my address to his Majesty was no more than a renewal of assurances, in behalf of the United States, of their friendly dispositions, and of their continued desire to cultivate a liberal intercourse of commerce and good offices with his Majesty's subjects and states, thanks for the protection and civilities of his Court, and good wishes of prosperity to his Majesty, his royal family, his subjects, and dominions.[1] The King's answer to me was in these words. "Mr. Adams, you may, with great truth, assure the United States that, whenever they shall fulfil the treaty on their part, I, on my part, will fulfil it in all its particulars. As to yourself, I am sure I wish you a safe and pleasant voyage, and much comfort with your family and friends."

This was the answer in ceremony. His Majesty was then pleased to ask me many questions about myself and my family, how long I had been absent from them, &c., which were intended, I suppose, to be very gracious and flattering, but are of no consequence to the public, and, therefore, will be here omitted. It now remains to take leave of the Queen and the Princess, the cabinet ministers, and corps diplomatique, a species of slavery, more of which, I believe, has fallen to my share, than ever happened before to a son of liberty; and I much fear that the omission of a letter of recall, and the offence

[1] The following is the address, as found in Mr. Adams's papers.

Sir, — As the period of my mission to your Majesty is on the point of expiring, I have solicited the honor of this audience, that I might have an opportunity of repeating, in behalf of the United States of America, their assurances of their friendly dispositions, and of their continued desire of a liberal intercourse of commerce and good offices with your Majesty's subjects and states.

In taking leave of your Majesty, I beg leave to present my most humble thanks to your Majesty for the protection and civilities I have received at your Majesty's Court; and my best wishes for every blessing to your Majesty, your Majesty's royal family, subjects, and dominions.

taken at it in Holland, will oblige me to go over to the Hague to repeat the same tedious ceremonies there. At this season of the year, so near the equinox, to have the passage from Harwich to Helvoet to cross twice, is a punishment for sins to me unknown.

I am extremely afflicted, my dear sir, at the news of your ill health; but I hope you will be soon restored, for the public, at this moment, has great need of your experience and abilities.

With much affection, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE EARL OF AILESBURY.

London, 28 February, 1788.

SIR, — It was my earnest desire to have obtained an audience of leave of the Queen, that I might have had an opportunity of presenting to her Majesty, before my departure for America, my most humble thanks for the civilities that myself and my family have received at her Majesty's Court, and my best wishes for every blessing and felicity to her Majesty, and to every branch of her Majesty's royal family; but the indispensable necessity I am under of making a journey to Holland, before my embarkation for America, so presses me in point of time, that it is now become impossible to repeat my request of an audience.

I am extremely sorry for the disarrangement of her Majesty's health, which has deprived me of the honor I solicited for three drawing rooms, and must now beg the favor of your Lordship to make my most respectful excuses, wherever they may be necessary. With great respect, I remain, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

A MEMORIAL.

To their High Mightinesses the Lords the States General of the United Netherlands.

HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS, — The subscriber, minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America, has the honor to communicate to your High Mightinesses an act of the United

States of America, in congress assembled, by which he is recalled from his mission to your High Mightinesses and permitted to revisit his native country.

The wisdom and magnanimity with which your High Mightinesses manifested your friendship to the United States of America, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two, contributed to accelerate that general peace of the world which has lasted so long; and the candor and goodness of your High Mightinesses, and of the whole republic, to the subscriber, as well as to his country, have made impressions on his mind, which neither time nor place can ever obliterate.

In terminating his residence in Europe, and in taking a respectful leave of your High Mightinesses, he begs leave to express his thanks for all indulgences and attentions to himself, and his ardent wishes for the happiness of your High Mightinesses and your families; and his sincere assurances that, in whatever country he may be, he shall never cease to pray for the liberty, the independence, and the universal prosperity of the whole republic of the United Netherlands.

Done at the Hague, this sixth day of March, A. D. 1798.

Signed, JOHN ADAMS.

(*Translation.*)

Extract from the record of the resolutions of their High Mightinesses the Lords the States General of the United Netherlands.

Thursday, 6 March, 1788.

MR. DE WASSENAAR CATWYKE, the president of the assembly, brought forward and made known the fact to their High Mightinesses, that Mr. Adams, minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America, had been at his house this morning, and had delivered to him, sealed up, a resolution adopted the 5th of October, 1787, by the United States of America, in congress assembled, by which it was allowed to Mr. Adams, at his request, to return to America, and to close his commission as minister plenipotentiary near their High Mightinesses; and that he had, at the same time, presented a memorial, by which

he takes leave of their High Mightinesses, which memorial is in the terms following: —

(*fiat insertio.*)

Whereupon, it having been considered, it seemed good, and was hereby ordered, that leave be taken of the said Mr. Adams, at the same time declaring that his person and conduct have been agreeable to their High Mightinesses, and that the usual present of a chain and medal of gold, of the value of thirteen hundred florins, be transmitted to him; the jeweller de Koning having it in charge to prepare the same forthwith.

And a copy of this resolution of their H. M. shall be delivered to the said Mr. Adams by the agent Slicher.

(Signed) W. F. H. Van Wassenaar.

A true copy.

H. Fagel.

JOHN AVERY, JR., TO JOHN ADAMS.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
Council Chamber, Boston, 6 June, 1788.

Sir, — Agreeably to the directions of the two branches of the General Court, I have the honor to inform you that you have been, this day, elected a delegate from this Commonwealth to serve in the congress of the United States for one year, to commence on the first Monday in November next.

I am, with great esteem, &c.

John Avery, Jr., *Secretary.*[1]

TO THEOPHILUS PARSONS.

Braintree, 2 November, 1788.

Dear Sir, — From the conversation that passed between you and me, when I had the pleasure to see you for a few

[1] The following vote of the House of Representatives is found among the papers.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the House of Representatives, 18 June, 1788.

Ordered, That a chair be assigned to the Honorable John Adams, whenever he may please to attend the debates of the House.

Attest. George R. Minot, *Clerk.*

moments at this place, I am apprehensive that you may think of me for a senator, as I find that some other gentlemen have done and continue to do.

You know very well, how ungracious and odious the non-acceptance of an appointment by election is; and, therefore, let me beg of you not to expose me to the necessity of incurring the censure of the public, and the obloquy of individuals, by so unpopular a measure.

I have long revolved, in an anxious mind, the duties of the man and the citizen; and, without entering into details at present, the result of all my reflections on the place of a senator in the new government, is an unchangeable determination to refuse it.

With great respect and esteem, I am dear sir, &c.

John Adams.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 4 March, 1789.

My Dear Friend, — I find, on inquiry, that you are elected Vice-President, having three or four times the number of votes of any other candidate. Maryland threw away their votes on Colonel Harrison, and South Carolina on Governor Rutledge, being, with some other States which were not unanimous for you, apprehensive that this was a necessary step to prevent your election to the chair. In this point they were mistaken, for the President, as I am informed from pretty good authority, has a unanimous vote.[1] It is the universal wish of all that I

[1] There was certainly a wide difference between receiving sixty-nine votes, the whole number, and only thirty-four, less than half. Mr. Hamilton has made it a matter of reproach to Mr. Adams that "he complained of unfair treatment, in not having an equal chance of the electoral vote, by leaving the votes to an uninfluenced current." What he did complain of, and very reasonably too, was, the secret effort made to reduce the votes for him everywhere, to such a degree as to leave him the representative of a minority. That this was assiduously done by Mr. Hamilton himself, is clear from his own letters now published. But Mr. Adams had different evidence in his hands at the time. From Hartford, John Trumbull, an impartial witness, gave him his idea of the action had in Connecticut, in the following terms: —

"In the choice of V. P. you had certainly no rival. All that could be done by your enemies was to deprive you of a number of votes. Many of your friends were duped on that occasion. I will inform you how it was managed in Connecticut. On the day before the election, Colonel Webb came on express to Hartford, sent, as he said, by Colonel Hamilton, &c., who, he assured us, had

have conferred with, and indeed their expectation, that both General Washington and yourself will accept; and should either refuse, it will have a very disagreeable effect. The members present met to-day in the City Hall; there being about eleven senators and thirteen representatives, and not constituting a quorum in either house, they adjourned till to-morrow.

Mrs. Gerry and the ladies join me in sincere regards to yourself, your lady, Colonel and Mrs. Smith; and be assured, I remain, &c.

E. Gerry.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

Extract from the Journal of the Senate of the United States.

Tuesday, April 21, 1789.

The senate assembled: present as yesterday.

The committee, appointed on the 20th instant, consisting of Mr. Strong and Mr. Izard, to conduct the Vice-President to the senate chamber, executed their commission; and Mr. Langdon, the president *pro tempore*, meeting the Vice-President upon the floor of the senate chamber, addressed him as follows: —

Sir, — I have it in charge from the senate to introduce you to the chair of this house, and also to congratulate you on your appointment to the office of Vice-President of the United States of America.

After which Mr. Langdon conducted the Vice-President to the chair, when the Vice-President addressed the senate as follows: —

Gentlemen of the Senate, — Invited to this respectable

made an exact calculation on the subject, and found that New Jersey were to throw away three votes, I think, and Connecticut two, and all would be well. I exclaimed against the measure, and insisted that it was all a deception; but what could my single opinion avail against an express, armed with intelligence and calculations? So our electors threw away two votes where they were sure they would do no harm."

Very justly does Mr. Adams remark, in one of his letters to Trumbull: — "I have seen the utmost delicacy used towards others, but my feelings have never been regarded."

These labors were not confined to Connecticut and New Jersey. Hamilton's Works, vol. v. p. 533. See also vol. vi. of this work, p. 543.

situation by the suffrages of our fellow citizens, according to the constitution, I have thought it my duty cheerfully and readily to accept it. Unaccustomed to refuse any public service, however dangerous to my reputation, or disproportioned to my talents, it would have been inconsistent to have adopted another maxim of conduct at this time, when the prosperity of the country and the liberties of the people require, perhaps, as much as ever, the attention of those who possess any share of the public confidence.

I should be destitute of sensibility, if, upon my arrival in this city, and presentation to this legislature, and especially to this senate, I could see, without emotion, so many of those characters, of whose virtuous exertions I have so often been a witness; from whose countenances and examples I have ever derived encouragement and animation; whose disinterested friendship has supported me, in many intricate conjunctures of public affairs, at home and abroad; those celebrated defenders of the liberties of this country, whom menaces could not intimidate, corruption seduce, nor flattery allure; those intrepid asserters of the rights of mankind, whose philosophy and policy have enlightened the world, in twenty years, more than it was ever before enlightened, in many centuries, by ancient schools or modern universities.

I must have been inattentive to the course of events, if I were either ignorant of the fame, or insensible to the merit, of those other characters in the senate, to whom it has been my misfortune to have been hitherto personally unknown.

It is with satisfaction that I congratulate the people of America on the formation of a national constitution, and the fair prospect of a consistent administration of a government of laws; on the acquisition of a house of representatives, chosen by themselves; of a senate, thus composed by their own State legislatures; and on the prospect of an executive authority, in the hands of one, whose portrait I shall not presume to draw. Were I blessed with powers to do justice to his character, it would be impossible to increase the confidence or affection of his country, or make the smallest addition to his glory. This can only be effected by a discharge of the present exalted trust, on the same principles, with the same abilities and virtues, which have uniformly appeared in all his former conduct, pub-

lic or private. May I, nevertheless, be indulged to inquire, if we look over the catalogue of the first magistrates of nations, whether they have been denominated presidents or consuls, kings or princes, where shall we find one, whose commanding talents and virtues, whose overruling good fortune, have so completely united all hearts and voices in his favor, who enjoyed the esteem and admiration of foreign nations and fellow citizens with equal unanimity? Qualities, so uncommon, are no common blessings to the country that possesses them. By those great qualities, and their benign effects, has Providence marked out the head of this nation with a hand, so distinctly visible, as to have been seen by all men, and mistaken by none.

It is not for me to interrupt your deliberations by any general observations on the state of the nation, or by recommending or proposing any particular measures. It would be superflous, to gentlemen of your great experience, to urge the necessity of order. It is only necessary to make an apology for myself. Not wholly without experience in public assemblies, I have been more accustomed to take a share in their debates, than to preside in their deliberations. It shall be my constant endeavor to behave towards every member of this most honorable body with all that consideration, delicacy, and decorum, which becomes the dignity of his station and character. But if, from inexperience or inadvertency, any thing should ever escape me, inconsistent with propriety, I must entreat you, by imputing it to its true cause, and not to any want of respect, to pardon and excuse it.

A trust of the greatest magnitude is committed to this legislature, and the eyes of the world are upon you. Your country expects, from the results of your deliberations, in concurrence with the other branches of government, consideration abroad and contentment at home, prosperity, order, justice, peace, and liberty. And may God Almighty's providence assist you to answer their just expectations.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 10 May, 1789.

Dear Sir, — Since mine of January 14th, yours of January 2d and March 1st have been handed to me; the former by Mr. Jones, whom I am glad to know on your recommendation, and to make him the channel of evidencing to you how much I esteem whatever comes from you. The internal agitations of this country, and the inactivity to which England is reduced by the state of imbecility in which the madness of the King has terminated, will leave the southwestern parts of Europe in peace for the present year. Denmark will probably continue to furnish only its stipulated succors to Russia, without engaging in the war as a principal. Perhaps a pacification may be effected between Russia and Sweden, though at present there is little appearance of it; so that we may expect that the war will go on this year between the two empires, the Turks and Swedes, without extending any further. Even the death of the Emperor, should it take place, would hardly withdraw his dominions from the war this summer. The revolution in this country has gone on hitherto with a quietness, a steadiness, and a progress, unexampled; but there is danger of a balk now. The three orders, which compose the States General, seem likely to stumble at the threshold on the great preliminary question, how shall they vote, by orders or persons? If they get well over this question, there will be no difficulty afterwards, there is so general a concurrence in the great points of constitutional reformation. If they do not get over this question (and this seems possible), it cannot be foreseen what issue this matter will take. As yet, however, no business being begun, no votes taken, we cannot pronounce with certainty the exact state of parties. This is a summary view of European affairs.

Though I have not official information of your election to the presidency of the senate, yet I have such information as renders it certain. Accept, I pray you, my sincere congratulations; no man on earth pays more cordial homage to your worth, nor wishes more fervently your happiness. Though I detest the appearance even of flattery, I cannot always suppress

the effusions of my heart. Present me affectionately to Mrs. Adams, Col. and Mrs. Smith. I hope to see you all this summer, and to return this fall to my prison; for all Europe would be a prison to me, were it ten times as big.

Adieu, my dear friend, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

17 May, 1789.

THE President of the United States wishes to avail himself of your sentiments on the following points.

1. Whether a line of conduct, equally distant from an association with all kinds of company on the one hand, and from a total seclusion from society on the other, ought to be adopted by him? And in that case, how is it to be done?

2. What will be the least exceptionable method of bringing any system, which may be adopted on this subject, before the public and into use?

3. Whether, after a little time, one day in every week will not be sufficient for receiving visits of compliment?

4. Whether it would tend to prompt impertinent applications, and involve disagreeable consequences, to have it known that the President will, every morning at eight o'clock, be at leisure to give audience to persons who may have business with him?

5. Whether, when it shall have been understood that the President is not to give general entertainments in the manner the presidents of congress have formerly done, it will be practicable to draw such a line of discrimination, in regard to persons, as that six, eight, or ten official characters, including in rotation the members of both houses of congress, may be invited, personally or otherwise, to dine with him on the days fixed for receiving company, without exciting clamors in the rest of the community?

6. Whether it would be satisfactory to the public for the President to make about four great entertainments in a year, on such great occasions as the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the alliance with France, the peace with Great

Britain, the organization of the general government; and whether arrangements of these two last kinds could be in danger of diverting too much of the President's time from business, or of producing the evils which it was intended to avoid by his living more recluse than the presidents of congress have hitherto lived?

7. Whether there would be any impropriety in the President's making informal visits; that is to say, in his calling upon his acquaintances or public characters, for the purpose of sociability or civility? And what, as to the form of doing it, might evince these visits to have been made in his private character, so as that they may not be construed into visits from the President of the United States? And in what light would his visits *rarely* at tea-parties be considered?

8. Whether, during the recess of congress, it would not be advantageous to the interests of the union for the President to make the tour of the United States, in order to become better acquainted with their principal characters and internal circumstances, as well as to be more accessible to numbers of well-informed persons, who might give him useful information and advice on political subjects?

9. If there is a probability that either of the arrangements may take place, which will eventually cause additional expenses, whether it would not be proper that these ideas should come into contemplation at the time when congress shall make a permanent provision for the support of the executive?

Remarks.

On the one side, no augmentation can be effected in the pecuniary establishment, which shall be made in the first instance for the support of the executive. On the other, all moneys destined to that purpose, beyond the actual expenditure, will be left in the treasury of the United States, or sacredly applied to the promotion of some national objects.

Many things, which appear of little importance in themselves and at the beginning, may have great and durable consequences from their having been established at the commencement of a new general government. It will be much easier to commence the administration upon a well-adjusted system, built on tenable grounds, than to correct errors, or alter

inconveniences, after they shall have been confirmed by habit. The President, in all matters of business and etiquette, can have no object but to demean himself in his public character in such a manner as to maintain the dignity of his office, without subjecting himself to the imputation of superciliousness or unnecessary reserve. Under these impressions, he asks for your candid and undisguised opinion.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S ANSWER.

New York, 17 May, 1789.

The Vice-President has the honor to present his humble opinion on the points proposed for his consideration.

1. That an association with all kinds of company, and a total seclusion from society, are extremes, which, in the actual circumstances of this country, and under our form of government, may be properly avoided.

2. The system of the President will gradually develop itself in practice, without any formal communication to the legislature, or publication from the press. Paragraphs in the public prints may, however, appear, from time to time, without any formal authority, that may lead and reconcile the public mind.

3. Considering the number of strangers from many countries, and of citizens from various States, who will resort to the seat of government, it is doubted whether two days in a week will not be indispensable for visits of compliment. A little experience, however, will elucidate this point.

4. Under the fourth head, it is submitted to consideration, whether all personal applications ought not to be made, in the first instance, to a minister of state. Yet an appeal should be open, by petition, to the President, who, if he judges the subject worthy of it, may admit the party to a personal interview. Access to the supreme magistrate ought not to be rigorously denied in any case that is worthy of his consideration. Nevertheless, in every case, the name, quality, and, when these are not sufficient to raise a presumption in their favor, their business, ought to be communicated to a chamberlain, or gentleman in waiting, who should judge whom to admit and whom to

exclude. Some limitation of time may be necessary, too, as, for example, from eight to nine or ten; for, without it, the whole forenoon, or the whole day, may be taken up.

5. There is no doubt that the President may invite what official characters, members of congress, strangers, or citizens of distinction he pleases, in small parties, without exciting clamors; but this should always be done without formality.

6. The entertainments mentioned in this article would much more properly be made by a minister of state for foreign or domestic affairs, or some other minister of state, or the Vice-President, whom, upon such occasions, the President, in his private character, might honor with his presence. But in no case whatever can I conceive it proper for the President to make any formal public entertainment.

7. There can be no impropriety in the President's making or receiving informal visits among his friends or acquaintances, at his pleasure. Undress, and few attendants, will sufficiently show that such visits are made as a man, a citizen, a friend, or acquaintance. But in no case whatever should a visit be made or returned in form by the President; at least, unless an emperor of Germany, or some other sovereign, should travel to this country. The President's pleasure should absolutely decide concerning his attendance at tea-parties in a private character; and no gentleman or lady ought ever to complain, if he never, or rarely attends. The President's private life should be at his own discretion, and the world should respectfully acquiesce. As President, he should have no intercourse with society, but upon public business, or at his levees. This distinction, it is, with submission, apprehended, ought to govern the whole conduct.

8. A tour might, no doubt, be made, with great advantage to the public, if the time can be spared; but it will naturally be considered, as foreign affairs arrive every day, and the business of the executive and judicial departments will require constant attention, whether the President's residence will not necessarily be confined to one place.

Observations.

The civil list ought to provide for the President's household. What number of chamberlains, aides-de-camp, secre-

taries, masters of ceremonies, &c. will become necessary, it is difficult to foresee. But should not all such establishments be distinct from the allowance to the President for his services, which is mentioned in the constitution? In all events, the provision for the President and his household ought to be large and ample. The office, by its legal authority, defined in the constitution, has no equal in the world, excepting those only which are held by crowned heads; nor is the royal authority in all cases to be compared to it. The royal office in Poland is a mere shadow in comparison with it. The Dogeship in Venice, and the Stadtholdership in Holland, are not so much. Neither dignity nor authority can be supported in human minds, collected into nations or any great numbers, without a splendor and majesty in some degree proportioned to them. The sending and receiving ambassadors, is one of the most splendid and important prerogatives of sovereigns, absolute or limited; and this, in our constitution, is wholly in the President. If the state and pomp essential to this great department are not, in a good degree, preserved, it will be in vain for America to hope for consideration with foreign powers.

These observations are submitted, after all, with diffidence, conscious that my long residence abroad may have impressed me with views of things incompatible with the present temper and feelings of our fellow-citizens; and with a perfect disposition to acquiesce in whatever may be the result of the superior wisdom of the President.[1]

TO JAMES LOVELL.

New York, 1 September, 1789.

Dear Sir, — I have not yet answered your letter of the 26th of July. You guess well; I find that I shall have all the unpopular questions to determine, and shall soon be pronounced *hostis republicani generis.* What they will do with me, I know

[1] It is a singular fact, that this should be the *only* answer to the President's queries on this delicate subject which has been found among Washington's papers. It is certain that he submitted them to Mr. Madison and Mr. Jay, and, it is likely, to several other persons, in whose judgment he trusted. Mr. Hamilton's answer, which is informal, has been published, for the first time, in the late collection made of his works. Vol. iv. p. 1.

not, but must trust to Providence. You insinuate that I am accused "of deciding in favor of the power of the prime, because I look up to that goal."[1] That I look up to that goal sometimes, is very probable, because it is not far above me, only one step, and it is directly before my eyes, so that I must be blind not to see it. I am forced to look up to it, and bound by duty to do so, because there is only the breath of one mortal between me and it. There was lately cause enough to look up to it, as I did with horror, when that breath was in some danger of expiring. But deciding for the supreme was not certainly the way to render that goal more desirable or less terrible, nor was it the way to obtain votes for continuing in it, or an advancement to it. The way to have insured votes would have been to have given up that power. There is not, however, to be serious, the smallest prospect that I shall ever reach that goal. Our beloved chief is very little older than his second, has recovered his health, and is a much stronger man than I am. A new Vice-President must be chosen before a new President. This reflection gives me no pain, but, on the contrary, great pleasure; for I know very well that I am not possessed of the confidence and affection of my fellow-citizens to the degree that he is. I am not of Cæsar's mind. The second place in Rome is high enough for me, although I have a spirit that will not give up its right or relinquish its place. Whatever the world, or even my friends, or even you, who know me so well, may think of me, I am not an ambitious man. Submission to insult and disgrace is one thing, but aspiring to higher situations is another. I am quite contented in my present condition, and should not be discontented to leave it.

Having said too much of myself, let me say something of you. The place of collector would undoubtedly have been yours, if the President could have found any other situation for your friend Lincoln. It was from no lukewarmness to you, I am certain; but the public cause demanded that Lincoln

[1] This is Mr. Lovell's language in reference to the casting vote given by Mr. Adams in favor of the President's power of removal. He goes on to say, "If I did not know you well, I should not write this to you. A weak man only would be discouraged by such suggestions of the base. All whom you esteem here are pleased with your vote. But, better than that, I know you have your own approbation upon your own principles, which lead regularly to *impavidum ferient ruinæ*."

should be supported, and this could not be done any other way. If, after some time, any other permanent place should be found for him, you, I presume, will come in collector. He[1] sailed yesterday, in good health, for Georgia; and may heaven prosper him with all happiness, honor, and success! It is a very honorable embassy, and will produce great and happy effects to these States. I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO GEORGE WALTON.

New York, 25 September, 1789.

Dear Sir, — The duplicate, *via* Charleston, of your letter of the thirtieth of August, never reached my hand till a day or two before the nomination took place to the office of judge of the district of Georgia. As I had the pleasure and advantage of a particular acquaintance with yourself, and the misfortune to know nothing at all, but by a very distant and general reputation, of the gentleman nominated, I should have been ill qualified to make an impartial decision between the candidates. I feel upon all occasions, I own, a particular pleasure in the appointment to office of gentlemen who are now well affected to the national constitution, who had some experience in life before the revolution, and took an active part in the course and conduct of it.

Union, peace, and liberty to North America, are the objects to which I have devoted my life, and I believe them to be as dear to you as to me. I reckon among my friends all who are in the communion of such sentiments, though they may differ in their opinion of the means of obtaining those ends. I will not say that an energetic government is the only means; but I will hazard an opinion, that a well-ordered, a well-balanced, a judiciously-limited government, is indispensably necessary to the preservation of all or either of those blessings. If the poor are to domineer over the rich, or the rich over the poor, we shall never enjoy the happiness of good government; and without an intermediate power, sufficiently elevated and independent to

[1] Benjamin Lincoln had been appointed one of three commissioners to negotiate a treaty with the Southern Indians.

control each of the contending parties in its excesses, one or the other will forever tyrannize. Gentlemen who had some experience before the revolution, and recollect the general fabric of the government under which they were born and educated, and who are not too much carried away by temporary popular politics, are generally of this opinion. But whether prejudice will not prevail over reason, passion over judgment, and declamation over sober inquiry, is yet to be determined. I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 20 April, 1790.

SIR, — Encroachments being made on the Eastern limits of the United States by settlers under the British government, pretending that it is the western and not the eastern river of the bay Passamaquoddy which was designated by the name of St. Croix, in the treaty of peace with that nation, I have to beg the favor of you to communicate any facts which your memory or papers may enable you to recollect, and which may indicate the true river the commissioners on both sides had in their view to establish as the boundary between the two nations. It will be of some consequence to be informed by what map they traced the boundary.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Secret.)

United States, 27 August, 1790.

Provided the dispute between Great Britain and Spain should come to the decision of arms, from a variety of circumstances

[1] No answer to this inquiry has been found. The deposition of Mr. Adams was taken. The information was also subsequently given in a letter to James Sullivan, one of the commissioners to settle the boundary. It is dated 2 August 1796. See p. 519 of this volume.

(individually unimportant and inconclusive, but very much the reverse when compared and combined) there is no doubt in my mind that New Orleans and the Spanish posts above it on the Mississippi will be among the first attempts of the former, and that the reduction of them will be undertaken by a combined operation from Detroit.

The *consequences* of having so formidable and enterprising a people as the British on both our flanks and rear, with their navy in front, as they respect our western settlements which may be seduced thereby, as they regard the security of the Union and its commerce with the West Indies, are too obvious to need enumeration.

What, then, should be the answer of the executive of the United States to Lord Dorchester, in case he should apply for permission to march troops through the territory of the said States from Detroit to the Mississippi?

What notice ought to be taken of the measure, if it should be undertaken without leave, which is the most probable proceeding of the two?

Mr. Adams will oblige the President of the United States by giving his opinion in writing on the above statement.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

New York, 29 August, 1790.

SIR, — That New Orleans and the Spanish posts on the Mississippi will be among the first attempts of the English, in case of a war with Spain, appears very probable; and that a combined operation from Detroit would be convenient to that end, cannot be doubted. The consequences on the western settlements, on the commerce with the West Indies, and on the general security and tranquillity of the American Confederation, of having them in our rear and on both our flanks, with their navy in front, are very obvious.

The interest of the United States duly weighed, and their duty conscientiously considered, point out to them, in the case of such a war, a neutrality, as long as it may be practicable.

The people of these States would not willingly support a war, and the present government has not strength to command, nor enough of the general confidence of the nation to draw, the men or money necessary, until the grounds, causes, and necessity of it should become generally known and universally approved. A pacific character, in opposition to a warlike temper, a spirit of conquest, or a disposition to military enterprise, is of great importance to us to preserve in Europe; and, therefore, we should not engage, even in defensive war, until the necessity of it should become apparent, or, at least, until we have it in our power to make it manifest in Europe as well as at home.

In order to preserve an honest neutrality, or even the reputation of a disposition to it, the United States must avoid, as much as possible, every real wrong, and even every appearance of injury to either party. To grant to Lord Dorchester, in case he should request it, permission to march troops through the territory of the United States, from Detroit to the Mississippi, would not only have an appearance, offensive to the Spaniards, of partiality to the English, but would be a real injury to Spain. The answer, therefore, to his Lordship, should be a refusal, in terms clear and decided, but guarded and dignified; in a manner which no power has more at command than the President of the United States.

If a measure so daring, offensive, and hostile, as the march of troops through our territory to attack a friend, should be hazarded by the English without leave, or especially after a refusal, it is not so easy to answer the question what notice ought to be taken of it.

The situation of our country is not like that of most of the nations in Europe. They have, generally, large numbers of inhabitants in narrow territories. We have small numbers scattered over vast regions. The country through which the Britons must pass from Detroit to the Mississippi is, I suppose, so thinly inhabited, and at such a distance from all the populous settlements, that it would be impossible for the President of the United States to collect militia or march troops sufficient to resist the enterprise. After the step shall have been taken, there are but two ways for us to proceed; one is war, and the other negotiation. Spain would probably remonstrate to the President of the United States; but whether she should or not,

the President of the United States should remonstrate to the King of Great Britain. It would not be expected, I suppose, by our friends or enemies, that the United States should declare war at once. Nations are not obliged to declare war for every injury, or even hostility. A tacit acquiescence, under such an outrage, would be misinterpreted on all hands; by Spain as inimical to her, and by Britain as the effect of weakness, disunion, and pusillanimity. Negotiation, then, is the only other alternative.

Negotiation, in the present state of things, is attended with peculiar difficulties. As the King of Great Britain twice proposed to the United States an exchange of ministers, once through Mr. Hartley, and once through the Duke of Dorset, and when the United States agreed to the proposition, flew from it; to send a minister again to St. James's, till that court explicitly promises to send one to America, is a humiliation to which the United States ought never to submit. A remonstrance from sovereign to sovereign cannot be sent but by an ambassador of some order or other; from minister of state to minister of state it might be transmitted in many other ways. A remonstrance, in the form of a letter from the American Minister of State to the Duke of Leeds, or whoever may be secretary of state for foreign affairs, might be transmitted through an envoy, minister plenipotentiary, or ambassador of the President of the United States at Paris, Madrid, or the Hague, and through the British ambassador at either of those courts. The utmost length that can be now gone, with dignity, would be to send a minister to the court of London, with instructions to present his credentials, demand an audience, make his remonstrance; but to make no establishment, and demand his audience of leave, and quit the kingdom in one, two, or three months, if a minister of equal degree were not appointed, and actually sent, to the President of the United States from the King of Great Britain.

It is a misfortune that, in these critical moments and circumstances, the United States have not a minister of large views, mature age, information, and judgment, and strict integrity, at the courts of France, Spain, London, and the Hague. Early and authentic intelligence from those courts may be of more importance than the expense; but, as the representatives of the people, as well as of the legislatures, are of a different opinion,

they have made a very scanty provision for but a part of such a system. As it is, God knows where the men are to be found who are qualified for such missions, and would undertake them. By an experience of ten years, which made me too unhappy at the time to be ever forgotten, I know that every artifice which can deceive, every temptation which can operate on hope or fear, ambition or avarice, pride or vanity, the love of society, pleasure, or amusement, will be employed to divert and warp them from the true line of their duty, and the impartial honor and interest of their country.

To the superior lights and information derived from office, the more serene temper and profound judgment of the President of the United States, these crude and hasty thoughts concerning the points proposed are humbly submitted, with every sentiment of respect and sincere attachment, by his

Most obedient and most humble servant,

John Adams.

TO A. HAMILTON, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Philadelphia, 25 April, 1791.

Dear Sir, — I do myself the honor to transmit to you my accounts which remain unsettled, for the last two years and eight months of my administrations abroad in the service of the United States. I have left a blank for my salary. In my own opinion it is but justice that it should be filled up with the sum of two thousand five hundred pounds sterling a year, because this was the contract under which I accepted my commission for the peace in 1779, and that for their High Mightinesses in 1781, which last continued in force until my return home. The resolution of Congress, which stated the salary of a minister abroad at nine thousand dollars, could not reasonably be intended to operate upon ministers and commissions which had been given and accepted upon different conditions. Such an interpretation of it would make it amount to a breach of public faith. Moreover, I have been well informed by Mr. Gerry, who proposed the alteration, that the reason of this resolution was a supposition that, in that time of peace, the expenses of living in

Europe were reduced. This motive was so far from being a just one, as applied to me, that I found the expenses of living in London about a quarter part dearer than I had ever known them in Paris or the Hague. This, therefore, was rather a reason for raising my salary to three thousand pounds sterling a year, which I actually spent, than for reducing it to nine thousand dollars. I have been informed by Mr. Barclay that Dr. Franklin charged, and has been allowed, two thousand five hundred pounds sterling a year till his return, and as I am in the same predicament with him, it is at least as just that it should be allowed to me; indeed, it is more so, because I certainly was obliged to spend more than that sum, and he undoubtedly spent less.

I have also requested an allowance for a private secretary. As the business of my mission to Holland, as well as that to England, lay upon me, in addition to my share in all the negotiations with Prussia and the other powers of Europe, as well as the Barbary States, it may readily be conceived that I had a great deal of business and still more writing to do, as copies of all such correspondences must be preserved, and therefore I hope the charge for a private secretary will not be thought unreasonable.

An allowance is asked also for one ministerial or diplomatic entertainment for each year. This is done for three reasons: 1. because it is the custom of the whole Corps Diplomatique; 2. because it seems to be a reasonable custom; and 3. because Mr. Franklin has charged and been allowed for all extraordinary entertainments, as I suppose, as he told me he had charged them or should charge them.

An outfit I have asked for, amounting to one year's salary. This will be but a very inadequate compensation to me, for the extraordinary expenses I was put to by the variety of services and multiplicity of commissions which were heaped upon me. My case is singular, and distinguished from that of every other gentleman who has ever been sent abroad in the service of the United States. In 1779, Congress sent me abroad, with two commissions, one to negotiate a peace, and another to his Britannic Majesty to negotiate a treaty of commerce with that power. Under these commissions I went to Paris, and resided there, which obliged me to take a house or apartments ready

furnished, and establish a household, equipage, and set of servants there. In 1780, Congress sent me a commission to borrow money in Holland, to the amount of ten millions of dollars. This obliged me to live in Holland. In 1781, Congress sent me a commission to treat with that republic, and a letter of credence to the States-General. This obliged me to hire a house and completely furnish it, because there was no such thing to be hired in Holland as furniture, as might be done and was done by Mr. Deane, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself at Paris. My commission for the peace obliged me to make journeys to Versailles. My commission for borrowing money not only augmented my expenses, but gave me more trouble and occasioned more labor and perplexity than all the other services. The frequent removals from one country to another, the continual change of servants and liveries, the wear and tear of baggage, and destruction of furniture, beside the perpetual plunder I was subjected to in my absence from my house in one country, while attending my duty in another, have wasted and consumed my salary in such a manner, that my family must be deprived of that reward for my time, trouble, risk, and services, which all of us were entitled to, and which some may have been happy enough honestly to secure. I say all of us were entitled to it, because Congress, on the 28th September, 1776, resolved, that their ministers should live in such a style and manner as they might find suitable and necessary to support the dignity of their public character, and that, besides their actual expenses, a handsome allowance be made to each of them, as a compensation for their time, trouble, risk, and services.

If the articles I have submitted are allowed me, difficult as it will be to justify myself to my family, I shall be content; but if not, I must crave an allowance of one half per cent., as commissions on nine millions of guilders, by me borrowed in Holland for the United States. When Congress allows four per cent. to the houses of Willink and Van Staphorst, and their undertakers, upon all these loans, which has already amounted to a handsome fortune to each house, it would be extremely hard and unreasonable to oblige me, who had more trouble with every one of these loans than those houses had — nay, who had more trouble with the first of them than they have had

with the whole — not only to do this whole business for nothing, but live at my own expense while I did it. This must be my hard fate, if nothing can be allowed me as commissions, nor for extraordinary services. Considerable sums were spent by me, at times, for secret services, and other sums, to no small amount, were advanced to Americans in distress, some of them in prison, and others escaped; but, as I have no vouchers for these and I suppose Congress would not be willing to set a precedent, I make no charge for them, although they were advanced out of my own money — part of my salary. Let me ask the favor of you, Sir, to look over these accounts, and then present them to the auditor, that they may be settled in some way or other by the next session of Congress. With great esteem I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

HENRY KNOX TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 10 June, 1791.

MY DEAR SIR, — I embrace the occasion of inclosing some letters, to thank you and Mrs. Adams for the comfortable accommodation of your house at Bush Hill. While the inhabitants of this city are panting for breath, like a hunted hare, we experience in the hall at Bush Hill a delightful and animated breeze.

The paragraphs in the Connecticut and New York papers, relative to your journey, indicate envy and blackness of heart. Who the author of these articles is, I know not, and it is quite immaterial. But eminence must be taxed.

Perhaps the "*political heresies*," mentioned in the preface to the American edition of Paine's pamphlet, as coming from a more respectable quarter,[1] may occasion some uneasiness. But the author has assured me, that the note he wrote to the printer never was intended for publication, but as a sort of apology for having detained the book, which was a borrowed one, longer than the impatience of the printer would admit.

But, if the idea was aimed at your doctrines, it ought not to

[1] Mr. Jefferson. See the next letter.

create a moment's pain. Conscious, as you are, of the invariable pursuit of the public happiness, regulated by the sober standard of reason, it is not the desultory ebullition of this or that man's mind, that can divert you from your object. For while human nature shall continue its course according to its primary principles, there will be a difference of judgment upon the same objects, even among good men.

The President is expected to arrive here about the 23d or 25th instant, but there is no information from him since the 16th of May. He has been perfectly received according to the abilities of the places through which he has passed.

The Indian campaign must go forward. We have marched and shall march by the latter end of this month two thousand eight hundred men. This force will be adequate, with the addition of the troops already on the frontiers. I am, &c.

H. Knox.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 17 July, 1791.

Dear Sir, — I have a dozen times taken up my pen to write to you, and as often laid it down again, suspended between opposing considerations. I determine, however, to write, from a conviction that truth between candid minds can never do harm. The first of Paine's pamphlets on the Rights of Man, which came to hand here, belonged to Mr. Beckley. He lent it to Mr. Madison, who lent it to me; and, while I was reading it, Mr. Beckley called on me for it, and as I had not finished it, he desired me, as soon as I should have done so, to send it to Mr. Jonathan B. Smith, whose brother meant to reprint it. I finished reading it, and, as I had no acquaintance with Mr. Jonathan B. Smith, propriety required that I should explain to him why I, a stranger to him, sent him the pamphlet. I accordingly wrote a note of compliment, informing him that I did it at the desire of Mr. Beckley, and, to take off a little of the dryness of the note, I added that I was glad it was to be reprinted here, and that something was to be publicly said against the political heresies which had sprung up among us, &c. I thought so little of this

note, that I did not even keep a copy of it; nor ever heard a tittle more of it, till, the week following, I was thunderstruck with seeing it come out at the head of the pamphlet. I hoped, however, it would not attract notice; but I found, on my return from a journey of a month, that a writer came forward, under the signature of Publicola, attacking not only the author and principles of the pamphlet, but myself as its sponsor, by name. Soon after came hosts of other writers, defending the pamphlet, and attacking you by name, as the writer of Publicola. Thus were our names thrown on the public stage, as public antagonists. That you and I differ in our ideas of the best form of government, is well known to us both; but we have differed as friends should do, respecting the purity of each other's motives, and confining our difference of opinion to private conversation; and I can declare with truth, in the presence of the Almighty, that nothing was further from my intention or expectation than to have had either my own or your name brought before the public on this occasion. The friendship and confidence which has so long existed between us, required this explanation from me, and I know you too well to fear any misconstruction of the motives of it. Some people who would wish me to be, or to be thought, guilty of improprieties, have suggested that I was Agricola, that I was Brutus, &c., &c. I never did in my life, either by myself or by any other, have a sentence of mine inserted in a newspaper, without putting my name to it; and I believe I never shall.

While the Empress is refusing peace under a mediation, unless Oczakow and its territory be ceded to her, she is offering peace on the perfect *statu quo* to the Porte, if they will conclude it without a mediation. France has struck a severe blow at our navigation by a difference of duty on tobacco carried in our and their ships, and by taking from foreign built ships the capability of naturalization. She has placed our whale oil on rather a better footing than ever, by consolidating the duties into a single one of six livres. They amounted before to some sous over that sum. I am told (I know not how truly) that England has prohibited our spermaceti oil altogether, and will prohibit our wheat till the price there is 52s. the quarter, which it almost never is. We expect hourly to hear the true event of General Scott's expedition. Reports give favorable hopes of it.

Be so good as to present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Adams, and to accept assurances of the sentiments of sincere esteem and respect, with which I am, dear Sir,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO T. JEFFERSON.

Braintree, 29 July, 1791.

DEAR SIR, — Yesterday, at Boston, I received your friendly letter of July 17th with great pleasure. I give full credit to your relation of the manner in which your note was written and prefixed to the Philadelphia edition of Mr. Paine's pamphlet on the Rights of Man; but the misconduct of the person who committed this breach of your confidence, by making it public, whatever were his intentions, has sown the seeds of more evils than he can ever atone for. The pamphlet, with your name to so striking a recommendation of it, was not only industriously propagated in New York and Boston, but, that the recommendation might be known to every one, was reprinted with great care in the newspapers, and was generally considered as a direct and open personal attack upon me, by countenancing the false interpretation of my writings, as favoring the introduction of hereditary monarchy and aristocracy into this country. The question everywhere was, what heresies are intended by the secretary of State? The answer in the newspapers was, "The Vice-President's notions of a limited monarchy, an hereditary government of King and Lords, with only elective Commons." Emboldened by these murmurs, soon after appeared the paragraphs of an unprincipled libeller in the New Haven Gazette, carefully reprinted in the papers of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, holding up the Vice-President to the ridicule of the world for his meanness, and to their detestation for wishing to subjugate the people to a few nobles. These were soon followed by a formal speech of the lieutenant-governor[1] of Massachusetts, very solemnly holding up the idea of hereditary powers, and cautioning the public against them, as if they were at that

[1] Samuel Adams.

moment in the most imminent danger of them. These things were all accompanied with the most marked neglect, both of the governor and lieutenant-governor of this State, towards me; and all together served as a hue and cry to all my enemies and rivals, to the old constitutional faction of Pennsylvania, in concert with the late insurgents of Massachusetts, both of whom consider my writings as the cause of their overthrow, to hunt me down like a hare, if they could. For this state of things Publicola, who, I suppose, thought that Mr. Paine's pamphlet was made use of as an instrument to destroy a man for whom he had a regard, whom he thought innocent, and, in the present moment, of some importance to the public, came forward. You declare very explicitly that you never did, by yourself or by any other, have a sentence of yours inserted in a newspaper without your name to it. And I with equal frankness declare that I never did, either by myself or by any other, have a sentence of mine inserted in any newspaper since I left Philadelphia. I neither wrote nor corrected Publicola.[1] The writer, in the composition of his pieces, followed his own judgment, information, and discretion, without any assistance from me.

You observe, "that you and I differ in our ideas of the best form of government, is well known to us both." But, my dear Sir, you will give me leave to say that I do not know this. I know not what your idea is of the best form of government. You and I have never had a serious conversation together, that I can recollect, concerning the nature of government. The very transient hints that have ever passed between us have been jocular and superficial, without ever coming to an explanation. If you suppose that I have, or ever had, a design or desire of attempting to introduce a government of King, Lords, and Commons, or in other words, an hereditary executive, or an hereditary senate, either into the government of the United States or that of any individual State, you are wholly mistaken. There is not such a thought expressed or intimated in any public writing or private letter, and I may safely challenge all mankind to produce such a passage, and quote the chapter and verse. If you have ever put such a construction on any thing of mine,

[1] The papers of Publicola were written by John Quincy Adams, then a young man commencing life as a lawyer in Boston. They were collected and printed in England, as the work of his father.

I beg you would mention it to me, and I will undertake to convince you that it has no such meaning.

Upon this occasion I will venture to say, that my unpolished writings, although they have been read by a sufficient number of persons to have assisted in crushing the insurrection of the Massachusetts, in the formation of the new constitutions of Pennsylvania, Georgia, and South Carolina, and in procuring the assent of all the States to the new national constitution, yet have not been read by great numbers. Of the few who have taken the pains to read them, some have misunderstood them, and others have wilfully misrepresented them, and these misunderstandings and misrepresentations have been made the pretence for overwhelming me with floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous abuse, unexampled in the history of this country.

It is thought by some, that Mr. Hancock's friends are preparing the way, by my destruction, for his election to the place of Vice-President, and that of Mr. Samuel Adams to be Governor of this commonwealth; and then the Stone House faction will be sure of all the loaves and fishes, in the national government and the State government, as they hope. The opposers of the present constitution of Pennsylvania, the promoters of Shays's rebellion and county resolves, and many of the detesters of the present national government, will undoubtedly assist them. Many people think, too, that no small share of a foreign influence, in revenge for certain intractable conduct at the treaty of peace, is and will be intermingled. The janissaries of this goodly combination, among whom are three or four who hesitate at no falsehood, have written all the impudence and impertinence which have appeared in the Boston papers upon this memorable occasion. I must own to you, that the daring traits of ambition and intrigue, and those unbridled rivalries, which have already appeared, are the most melancholy and alarming symptoms that I have ever seen in this country; and if they are to be encouraged to proceed in their course, the sooner I am relieved from the competition, the happier I shall be.

I thank you, Sir, very sincerely for writing to me upon this occasion. It was high time that you and I should come to an explanation with each other. The friendship that has subsisted for fifteen years without the smallest interruption, and, until this

occasion without the slightest suspicion, ever has been and still is very dear to my heart. There is no office which I would not resign, rather than give a just occasion to one friend to forsake me. Your motives for writing to me I have not a doubt were the most pure and the most friendly; and I have no suspicion that you will not receive this explanation from me in the same friendly light.[1]

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 30 August, 1791.

My dear Sir, — I received some time ago your favor of July 29th, and was happy to find that you saw, in its true point of view, the way in which I had been drawn into the scene which must have been so disagreeable to you. The importance which you still seem to allow to my note, and the effect you suppose it to have had, though unintentional in me, induce me to show you, that it really had no effect. Paine's pamphlet, with my note, was published here about the second week in May; not a word ever appeared in the public papers here on the subject for more than a month, and I am certain not a word on the subject would ever have been said, had not a writer, under the name of Publicola, at length undertaken to attack Mr. Paine's principles, which were the principles of the citizens of the United States. Instantly a host of writers attacked Publicola, in support of those principles. He had thought proper to misconstrue a figurative expression in my note, and these writers so far noticed me as to place the expression in its true light; but this was only an incidental skirmish, preliminary to the general engagement, and they would not have thought me worth naming, had not he thought proper to bring me on the scene.[2] His antago-

[1] The copy of this letter is upon a separate sheet of paper, and not in the letter book. It terminates as above. Mr. Jefferson alludes to its contents in his memorandum for the 13th of August, 1791. *Works*, edited by T. J. Randolph, vol. iv. p. 453.

[2] Is it possible that Mr. Jefferson, at this time holding the office of Secretary of State, could have persuaded himself that his position in the country was of so little weight? Some idea of the effect in Philadelphia of the publication may be gathered from the extracts from a letter of Mr. Lear, of the 8th May, printed in *Washington's Writings*, vol. x. pp. 161 – 163, note. Mr. Jefferson, in his letter of the same date, anticipated the consequences very clearly.

nist, very criminally, in my opinion, presumed you to be Publicola,[1] and on that presumption hazarded a personal attack on you. No person saw with more uneasiness than I did this unjustifiable assault, and the more so, when I saw it continued after the printer had declared you were not the author. But you will perceive from all this, my dear Sir, that my note contributed nothing to the production of these disagreeable pieces. As long as Paine's pamphlet stood on its own feet and on my note, it was unnoticed. As soon as Publicola attacked Paine, swarms appeared in his defence. To Publicola, then, and not in the least degree to my note, this whole contest is to be ascribed, and all its consequences.

You speak of the execrable paragraph in the Connecticut paper. This, it is true, appeared before Publicola, but it had no more relation to Paine's pamphlet and my note than to the Alcoran. I am satisfied the writer of it had never seen either; for when I passed through Connecticut about the middle of June, not a copy had ever been seen by anybody, either in Hartford or New Haven, nor probably in that whole State; and that paragraph was so notoriously the reverse of the disinterestedness of character which you are known to possess, by everybody who knows your name, that I never heard a person speak of the paragraph but with an indignation in your behalf, which did you entire justice. This paragraph, then, certainly did not flow from my note, any more than the publications which Publicola produced. Indeed, it was impossible that my note should occasion your name to be brought into question; for, so far from naming you, I had not even in view any writing which I might suppose to be yours,[2] and the opinions I alluded to were principally those I had heard in common conversation from a sect aiming at the subversion of the present government to bring in their favorite form of a King, Lords, and Commons.

Thus, I hope, my dear Sir, that you will see me to have been

[1] If this was criminal, Mr. Jefferson, probably, erred with him. He attributes one article in Fenno's paper, at least, to Mr. Adams. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. x. p. 159, last line of note.

[2] But on the other hand is the following, addressed to another person; "That I had in my view the *Discourses on Davila*, which had filled Fenno's papers for a twelvemonth without contradiction, is certain." Jefferson to Washington, (8 May, 1791,) in Sparks's edition of *Washington's Writings*, vol. x. p. 160, note. Those who are curious in such matters would do well to compare the *tone* of the two letters throughout.

as innocent *in effect* as I was in intention. I was brought before the public without my own consent, and from the first moment of seeing the effort of the real aggressor in this business, to keep me before the public, I determined that nothing should induce me to put pen to paper in the controversy. The business is now over, and I hope its effects are over, and that our friendship will never be suffered to be committed, whatever use others may think proper to make of our names.

The event of the King's flight from Paris, and his recapture, will have struck you with its importance. It appears, I think, that the nation is firm within, and it only remains to see whether there will be any movement from without. I confess, I have not changed my confidence in the favorable issue of that revolution, because it has always rested on my own ocular evidence of the unanimity of the nation, and wisdom of the patriotic party in the national assembly. The last advices render it probable that the Emperor will recommence hostilities against the Porte; it remains to see whether England and Prussia will take a part.

Present me to Mrs. Adams with all the affections I feel for her, and be assured of those devoted to yourself by, my dear Sir, your sincere friend and servant.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO "A RECLUSE MAN."

Philadelphia, 19 January, 1792.

SIR, — I received by the last post a sheet subscribed "A Recluse Man," inclosed with another in print, and have read both with feelings and reflections, some of which I should not choose to commit to paper. The printed one I had read with much pleasure in its season, and felt myself obliged to the writer, although I had no knowledge or suspicion of the author.[1] I have sometimes thought of collecting together, and printing in volumes, all that has been written at me since my return from

1 This was a New York gentleman, who subsequently disclosed his name to Mr. Adams, and furnished him some information as to the sources of the attacks made upon him.

Europe to my native country. If I had more regard for my own glory in the eyes of posterity than for that of my fellow-citizens, I should esteem such a monument far preferable to Mr. Ceracchi's marble. Such a torrent could flow only from the foul source of secret enmity to the Constitution of the United States, united with another stream of ill will to the present constitution of Pennsylvania; both mingled with foreign politics and domestic envy, jealousy, and disappointment. And all these parties and individuals have done me the choice honor to give to the world and to posterity, in the bitterness and agony of their hearts, the fullest proofs that they consider me as the first obstacle in their way. It gives me pain, however, to perceive that all their endeavors were ever able to impose for a moment on a man of letters, of so much candor, sagacity, and information as the "recluse man." The writers in opposition to me have founded their speculations on my Defence of the Constitutions. These volumes will answer for themselves to any one who will inquire of them, and will prove that no other books that ever were written, except the Bible, were ever so much belied. If you will do me the favor to accept a set of them, and the greater favor to read them, I will order them to be presented to you.

The history of my "passion for titles" is briefly this. In 1788 and 1789, there was much inquiry, in conversation in Boston and its neighborhood, concerning the titles which were to be given to the representatives, senators, and president, in the new government. Many were for "Majesty" to the latter; others for "Highness," some for "Excellency," and others for no title at all. The title of "most honorable" was constantly given to the senators in one of the Boston papers at least, Russell's Centinel, and it seemed to be a general opinion that some title or other must be given to the president and senators. When I took my seat in Senate at New York, a committee of both Houses reported a plan of receiving the President, when he should arrive, one part of which was, that the Vice-President should receive him at the door of the senate chamber, and conduct him to the chair, and afterwards address him, to inform him that both Houses were ready to attend him while he took the oath. This report was accepted by the Senate, after having been accepted by the House. Upon this I arose in my place,

and asked the advice of the senate, in what form I should address him; whether I should say, "Mr. Washington," "Mr. President," "Sir," "May it please your Excellency," or what else? I observed that it had been common while he commanded the army to call him "His Excellency," but I was free to own it would appear to me better to give him no title but "Sir," or "Mr. President," than to put him on a level with a governor of Bermuda, or one of his own ambassadors, or a governor of any one of our States. After I had made my observations, a senator arose and said it was an important point, and this was the precise moment to settle it. He therefore moved for a committee of both Houses to consider and report upon it. This is the substance of the charge against me for a passion for titles. For my own part, I freely own that I think decent and moderate titles, as distinctions of offices, are not only harmless, but useful in society, and that in this country, where I know them to be prized by the people as well as their magistrates as highly as by any people or any magistrates in the world, I should think some distinction between the magistrates of the national government and those of the State governments proper. There is not, however, in the United States, personally, a citizen more indifferent upon the subject, or more willing to conform to the public will or wish concerning it. If the proofs that have been given me in the newspapers of a deep malice against a man who has spent a life of anxiety, hazard, and labor in the service of his country, have given me pain, it has been in some measure compensated by bringing me to the knowledge of the "recluse man," whose goodness of heart, and elegance of composition, I shall not soon or easily forget.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] The uneasiness created by this question of titles is singularly characteristic of the disturbed condition of the times. In Virginia, an addition had been made to the charges against Mr. Adams on this subject, in the report, currently believed, that he never appeared in public except with a coach and six. See Sparks's *Washington*, vol. x. p. 20, note. Yet in Massachusetts, the social system in which had been far more democratic than that in Virginia, the titles to be given to the two chief officers were fixed by the constitution of 1780, and have been continued down to the present day. The public estimation of the dignity of the offices has, nevertheless, been steadily declining under the effect of more powerful causes than mere titles can counteract.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 25 June, 1792.

My dear Sir, — You will find inclosed your account, which I take the liberty to send, lest by not adverting to the state of it some inconvenience might ensue.

You are, I presume, aware that Mr. Clinton is to be your competitor at the next election. I trust he could not have succeeded in any event, but the issue of his late election will not help his cause.[1] Alas! Alas!

If you have seen some of the last numbers of the National Gazette,[2] you will have perceived that the plot thickens, and that something very like a serious design to subvert the government discloses itself.

With sincere respect and attachment, I am, dear Sir,

Alexander Hamilton.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 9 September, 1792.

My dear Sir, — I trust you are sufficiently convinced of my respect for and attachment to you, to render an apology for the liberty I am going to take unnecessary. I learn with pain that you may not probably be here till late in the session. I fear that this will give some handle to your enemies to misrepresent, and though I am persuaded you are very indifferent, personally, to the event of a certain election, yet I hope you are not so as regards the cause of good government. The difference in that view is, in my conception, immense, between the success of Mr.

[1] The election for Governor of the State of New York, which took place in April of this year. It had been so closely contested that the majority for Mr. Jay depended on the decision of the board of canvassers upon the validity of the votes of three counties in which there had been an informality in the return. They rejected them, which brought in George Clinton by a majority of 108 votes. But, like all attempts to do violence to the public opinion, this reacted upon the authors of it. Hammond's *History of Political Parties in New York*, vol. i. p. 62. *Life of John Jay*, by W. Jay, vol. i. p. 287.

[2] The newspaper lately set up by P. Freneau, as the organ of Mr. Jefferson's friends.

Clinton or yourself, and some sacrifices of feeling are to be made. But this is not the only relation in which I deem your early presence here desirable. Permit me to say it best suits the firmness and elevation of your character to meet all events, whether auspicious or otherwise, on the ground where station and duty call you. One would not give the ill-disposed the triumph of supposing that an anticipation of want of success had kept you from your post.

You observe, my dear Sir, I speak without much *ménagement*. You will ascribe it to my confidence and esteem. It is not necessary in any view to multiply words — I forbear it — but allow me to add that it is the universal wish of your friends you should be as soon as possible at Philadelphia.[1]

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Wednesday, 8 January, 1794.

DEAR SIR, — I would thank you for giving the papers herewith sent a perusal, and for the result of it.

I am now deliberating on the measure proper and necessary to be taken with respect to Mr. G——t, and wish for aid in so doing; the critical state of things making me more than usually anxious to decide right in the present case.

None but the heads of department are privy to these papers, which I pray may be returned this evening or in the morning.[2] With very sincere esteem and regard I am, always,

Your obedient and affectionate servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

[1] It does not appear that this letter was ever answered.

[2] It is probable that these papers contained the evidence transmitted from South Carolina, of Mr. Genet's efforts to enlist men for an expedition against the Spanish authorities in Florida, which was transmitted to Congress by the President, in his message of the 15th of January of this year. No answer has been found. From this date, for three years, there are no letter-books.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Monticello, 6 February, 1795.

Dear Sir, — The time which has intervened between the receipt of your favor, covering D'Ivernois' letter, and this answer, needs apology; but this will be found in the state of the case. I had received from him a letter similar to that you inclosed. As the adoption of his plan depended on our legislature, and it was then in session, I immediately inclosed it to a member, with a request that he would sound well the opinions of the leading members, and if he found them disposed to enter into D'Ivernois' views, to make the proposition, but otherwise not to hazard it. It is only three days since I have received from him information of his proceedings. He found it could not prevail. The unprepared state of our youths to receive instruction through a foreign language, the expense of the institution, and its disproportion to the moderate state of our population, were insuperable objections. I delayed myself the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your letter till I might be able to give you at the same time the result of the proposition it forwarded. I have explained this to M. D'Ivernois in the inclosed letter,[1] which my distance from any seaport, and the convenience of your position, will, I hope, excuse my committing to your care. I have found so much tranquillity of mind in a total abstraction from every thing political, that it was with some difficulty I could resolve to meddle even in the splendid project of transplanting the academy of Geneva, *en masse*, to Virginia; and I did it under the usual reserve of *sans tirer en conséquence*. In truth, I have so much occupation otherwise, that I have not time for taking a part in any thing of a public kind, and I therefore leave such with pleasure to those who are to live longer and enjoy their benefits. Tranquillity becomes daily more and more the object of my life, and of this I certainly find more in my present pursuits than in those of any other part of my life. I recall, however, with pleasure, the memory of some of the acquaintances I have made in my progress through it, and retain strong wishes for their happiness. I pray you to

[1] See Mr. Randolph's edition of *Jefferson's Writings*, vol. iii. p. 309.

accept with kindness those which I sincerely entertain for you, and to be assured of the high respect and esteem, with which

I am, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

T. JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Monticello, 28 February, 1796.

I am to thank you, my dear Sir, for forwarding M. D'Ivernois' book on the French revolution. I receive every thing with respect which comes from him; but it is on politics, a subject I never loved, and now hate. I will not promise, therefore, to read it thoroughly. I fear the oligarchical executive of the French will not do. We have always seen a small council get into cabals and quarrels, the more bitter and relentless the fewer they are. We saw this in our committee of the States, and that they were, from their bad passions, incapable of doing the business of their country. I think that for the prompt, clear, and consistent action so necessary in an executive, unity of person is necessary, as with us. I am aware of the objection to this, that the office, becoming more important, may bring on serious discord in elections. In our country I think it will be long first; not within our day; and we may safely trust to the wisdom of our successors the remedies of the evil to arise in theirs. Both experiments, however, are now fairly committed, and the result will be seen. Never was a finer canvass presented to work on than our countrymen, all of them engaged in agriculture or the pursuits of honest industry, independent in their circumstances, enlightened as to their rights, and firm in their habits of order and obedience to the laws. This, I hope, will be the age of experiments in government, and that their basis will be founded on principles of honesty, not of mere force. We have seen no instance of this since the days of the Roman republic, nor do we read of any before that. Either force or corruption has been the principle of every modern government, unless the Dutch, perhaps, be excepted, and I am not well enough informed to except them absolutely. If ever the morals of a people could be made the basis of their own government, it is our case; and he who could propose to govern such a people by the corruption

of their legislature, before he could have one night of quiet sleep, must convince himself that the human soul, as well as body, is mortal. I am glad to see that, whatever grounds of apprehension may have appeared of a wish to govern us otherwise than on principles of reason and honesty, we are getting the better of them. I am sure, from the honesty of your heart, you join me in detestation of the corruption of the English government, and that no man on earth is more incapable than yourself of seeing that copied among us, willingly. I have been among those who have feared the design to introduce it here, and it has been a strong reason with me for wishing there was an ocean of fire between that island and us. But away, politics!

I owe a letter to the auditor on the subject of my accounts while a foreign minister, and he informs me yours hang on the same difficulties with mine. Before the present government, there was a usage, either practised or understood, which regulated our charges. This government has directed the future by a law; but this is not retrospective, and I cannot conceive why the treasury cannot settle accounts under the old Congress, on the principles that body acted on. I shall very shortly write to Mr. Harrison on this subject, and if we cannot have it settled otherwise, I suppose we must apply to the legislature. In this I will act in concert with you, if you approve of it. Present my very affectionate respects to Mrs. Adams, and be assured that no one more cordially esteems your virtues than, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend and servant,

Thomas Jefferson.

JAMES SULLIVAN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 30 July, 1796.

Sir, — Upon contemplating the subject of settling the eastern boundary of the United States, and attending to the expression, in the treaty of 1795, that the commissioners shall decide what river was intended by the commissioners at Paris in 1783, as the St. Croix, I am of opinion that it is necessary to establish the facts, that Mitchell's map was, as an authority, before the commissioners, and that the river thereon marked as the bound-

ary of the Massachusetts was by them intended as the St. Croix. For this purpose I think it will be necessary to obtain the evidence of these facts from the commissioners themselves. I have, therefore, since I had the honor of an interview with you, forwarded a letter to Governor Jay, requesting him to give me in writing, in form of an affidavit, or otherwise, as shall be most agreeable to him, and most conducive to the national interest, his recollection on this subject. I have the honor to make the same request to you, knowing that you are the best judge of the propriety as well as of the necessity of such a measure, and that you will readily do whatever may be properly done in this exigency. Perhaps one fact is very important, that it was not intended, by the treaty of 1783, to give any new boundary to the east side of Massachusetts.

I am, with great respect, &c.

JAMES SULLIVAN.

TO JAMES SULLIVAN.

Quincy, 2 August, 1796.

SIR, — I received last evening the letter you did me the honor to write me the 30th of July, and am ready to give you all the information in my power.

Mitchell's map was the only one which the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States, and the minister plenipotentiary of Great Britain, made use of in their conferences and discussions relative to the boundaries of the United States, in their negotiation of the peace of 1783, and of the provisional articles of the 30th of November, 1782. Upon that map, and that only, were those boundaries delineated; and the river marked on that map with the name of St. Croix, was the river agreed upon as the eastern boundary of the State of Massachusetts and of the United States. It was not intended by either party to give any new boundary to the east side of Massachusetts; but the real eastern boundary of the province of Massachusetts Bay, according to the charter of William and Mary, was intended to be the eastern boundary of the United States. To the foregoing facts I am ready to attest, in any manner that may be judged neces-

sary, and if Mr. Jay should transmit you an affidavit, I shall be very willing to do the same; but I can scarcely think it necessary, because I cannot believe that any of these facts will be denied or questioned.

The decease of Mr. Oswald is unfortunate, because I am well assured he would have avowed all these facts with the utmost frankness and candor. Mr. Whitefoord, the secretary to his commission, I am confident, will readily admit them all. Mr. William Franklin, the secretary to the American commission, knows them. Dr. Franklin, before his death, transmitted to the then Secretary of State, Mr. Jefferson, as I was informed by him, a full state of this affair, according to his recollection, a document which probably Colonel Pickering has transmitted to you. If not, it may be useful for you to obtain it from his office. Lord St. Helens, formerly Mr. Fitzherbert, might or might not be informed by Mr. Oswald at the time. If he was, I have confidence enough in his lordship's honor and candor to believe that he will confirm all that I have said. Benjamin Vaughan, Esq., might or might not be informed; if he was, either by Mr. Oswald or Mr. Whitefoord, or any of the American ministers, his testimony cannot but corroborate the account I have given.

Wishing you a pleasant voyage and safe return, I am dear Sir, &c.

John Adams.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Cambridge, 3 February, 1797.

My dear Sir, — The newspaper which you did me the honor to inclose, containing Mr. Pickering's letter to Mr. Pinkney, on the subject of Mr. Adet's letter to the former, I have carefully perused; but a further examination of it, with the documents and Mr. Adet's letter, is necessary to obtain a clear idea of the subject. That part of it which discusses the claim of gratitude made by France, I consider, in a certain degree, as expedient and dignified; but am apprehensive that she will view the discussion in its full extent, as having trespassed the line of defence, and as tending rather to crimination than

accommodation.[1] Should this unfortunately be the case, it will only serve to increase our difficulties. But what struck me with surprise, in this part of the performance, at least in what of it relates to the negotiation for peace, was a profound silence with respect to your conduct, after it was known in Europe, and acknowledged throughout the United States, to have been highly beneficial to your country, and honorable to yourself. This, I presume, must be considered by intelligent and candid men, as manifesting an intention to place you in the back ground, and to leave the public, whose confidence and esteem you possess, in an eminent degree, at a loss for the reason of such an extraordinary measure. Perhaps I am mistaken in this matter; but if not, permit me to inquire, retired as I am from the political world, who are the actors, and what is the object of this political drama? Soon after I began Mr. Pickering's letter, I had doubts whether it was written by himself, it appearing to me, in point of style and system, dissimilar to his general performances. It then occurred to me, that one of the two quondam secretaries must have been the author. When I had perused it farther, and came to the part first alluded to, I conceived that the southern secretary would not have carried his strictures so far against the French; that the northern secretary, on this occasion, would have been less scrupulous, and that the circumstantial account, respecting Mr. Jay, must have been obtained of him, and published by a person in his entire confidence; neither of which circumstances will, probably, apply to the southern, whilst they both may to the northern secretary. My opinion was also strengthened by information respecting the letters of Phocion (for I have not seen them), that whilst the author endeavored to invalidate the pretensions of Mr. Jefferson, he made no advances to the support of yours, but meditated the plan to bring, by surprise, Mr. Pinckney into the chair.

It will be a great gratification to me to ascertain whether my information and conjectures in this instance are in any degree well founded. And, be this as it may, I must consider Mr. Jay as a person of too much honor to have given the information,

[1] Mr. Hamilton appears to have entertained a similar opinion, though expressed in more guarded terms. See his letter to President Washington, in the late edition of his works, vol. vi. p. 194.

in the letter, for so partial a purpose. This matter, as it relates to yourself, appears to me of a delicate nature. Some of your friends may conceive that, at present, silent contempt will be more dignified than any measure that can be adopted; whilst others may suppose that an advantage will be taken of silence, to establish in the public mind doubts of your eminent services in the negotiation referred to, and will propose a statement of facts, to accompany, in all the gazettes, the publication of Mr. Pickering's letter. I confess, for my own part, I am not sufficiently instructed to form an opinion on the subject, but am, nevertheless, earnest in my wishes to see such intrigues frustrated, and the meritorious officers of the public triumphant over their ungenerous enemies. I remain, my dear Sir, with every sentiment of esteem and respect, &c.

E. Gerry.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 13 February, 1797.

My dear Sir, — I received by this day's post your favor of the 3d, No. 2. I had before received No. 1. I shall confine myself in this to No. 2.

You are apprehensive "that France will view the discussion of gratitude in its full extent, as trespassing the line of defence." But Adet had laid his demands of gratitude so high, and all his partisans were in the habit of deafening our people with such rude, extravagant, and arrogant pretensions to it, that it seems to have become necessary to be explicit upon the subject. I may say to a friend of your discretion, what I believe you will agree in, that there is quite as modest a demand of gratitude due from them to us, as from us to them. I think I can demonstrate that the French nation derived more advantage from the connection than we did — that she owes her independence as much to us as we do ours to her. Whether she has thrown away her advantages by her revolution or not, is for her to consider. We had nothing to do with that by treaty or in practice. We have imprudently gone too far in our approbation of it, and adopted, by sympathy, too much of her enthusiasm

in it; for we were, and still are, incapable of judging whether it was wise or not, useful or not, destructive or not. Our treaty obliged us to no approbation of it, or concern in it, and our weak ideas and sensations of gratitude have led us into the fundamental error of taking too large a share of interest and sympathy in it.

The people of this country must not lose their conscious integrity, their sense of honor, nor their sentiment of their own power and force, so far as to be upbraided in the most opprobrious and contumelious language, and be wholly silent and passive under it, and that in the face of all mankind. The profound silence with respect to my conduct, which surprises you, was all right. It was good judgment and sound policy to leave me wholly out of the question, because the consequences of that letter of Mr. Pickering's were to be expected altogether, good or bad, under my administration. As it is, no irritation against me can arise from this letter. Mr. Pickering took his document from records or files in his own office, the despatches of Mr. Jay; and he comes not down so late as my arrival in Paris. I was detained at the Hague by the negotiation of the treaty with Holland. It is true I had asserted all Mr. Jay's principles two years before, in a correspondence with the Count de Vergennes upon the occasion of the interposition of the two imperial courts with an offer of mediation and proposal of a congress at Vienna. I had also written to Mr. Jay, in my private letters, declaring that I never would treat until a commission arrived in Paris expressly to treat with the ministers plenipotentiary of the United States of America, and urged, exhorted, and animated Mr. Jay to stand firm in the same resolution. Whether my letters to him first suggested to him this system, or whether his reasoning and mine concurred exactly in the same point, is immaterial to me. I believe it probable we thought alike. But the miserable *gloriole* of settling this point is no object with me, comparable to the importance of keeping me wholly out of sight in my present situation. This was not done without consulting me, nor without my advice. I hope the controversy will never be pushed so far as to necessitate the publication of my despatches upon that occasion. Pickering and all his colleagues are as much attached to me as I desire. I have no jealousies from that quarter.[1]

[1] Mr. Adams has been described, by the persons here referred to, as extremely

You are mistaken in your conjectures about a northern and southern ex-secretary. Neither had any thing to do in this business. Pickering himself was the engineer, and Wolcott, McHenry, and Lee, with Washington superintending all, corrected, softened, and amended. Indeed, any one that I have mentioned is equal to the task. Phocion, the ex-secretary, and their connections, did not, I believe, meditate, by surprise to bring in Pinckney. I believe they honestly meant to bring in me;[1] but they were frightened into a belief that I should fail, and they, in their agony, thought it better to bring in Pinckney than Jefferson, and some, I believe, preferred bringing in Pinckney President rather than Jefferson should be Vice-President.

I believe there were no very dishonest intrigues in this business. The zeal of some was not very ardent for me, but I believe none opposed me. They found the people more attached to me than they were, or than they expected to find them. In Pennsylvania, partly folly and partly wickedness effected a purpose not conformable to the real wishes of the state, as I am assured, and, unless my self-love and vanity deceive me, have good reason to believe. I need not hint to you the necessity of keeping me out of sight.

Who is to be Governor? I should be at no loss, if I were at

jealous and suspicious. His real error was too implicit a trust in their good faith. Even at this early moment the secretaries, who held over, were relied upon to control him. Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Administrations*, vol. i. pp. 476, 477, 499; vol. ii. pp. 368, 400. Hamilton's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 251.

[1] Not many days after the confident expression of this opinion, Mr. Adams received from an old friend in Albany unequivocal evidence of the secret hostility of Mr. Hamilton and his immediate friends. He had already heard of, but had not seen, the letter to Mr. Higginson. Mr. Jefferson, far more keen-sighted in stratagem, had hit the truth two months earlier. Since the publication of Mr. Hamilton's works, not a doubt can remain that he did, in secret, endeavor to take advantage of the mode of voting indiscriminately for President and Vice-President, in order to bring in Mr. Pinckney, the candidate designed for the Vice-Presidency, by surprise, over the head of Mr. Adams, whom the great body of the party unquestionably intended to make President. The immediate consequence of this attempt was to spread distrust in the ranks of the federal party, and to insure the scattering of so many votes that Mr. Pinckney was defeated, even for the Vice-Presidency, he falling behind Mr. Jefferson, the candidate of the opposite party for President. But for Mr. Hamilton's efforts this misfortune to the party would not, probably, have happened. Mr. Hamilton's own opinion of the propriety of using the old clause of the Constitution to such ends, became afterwards clear enough, when he applied it to the case of Aaron Burr. Even then, however, he rested his objections quite as much upon expediency as upon the far more serious moral obstacles. See Hamilton's *Works*, vol. vi. pp. 186, 188, 191, 531, 537. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. i. p. 408–412. Randolph's *Jefferson*, vol. iii. p. 339.

Quincy and could vote, but perhaps could do nothing. I love to see 1765 and 1775 men in honor. I regret infinitely that so many of them are fickle, variable, weak, if not too feebly principled.

With strong affection,

JOHN ADAMS.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

Extract from the Journal of the Senate of the United States.

Wednesday, 15 February, 1797.

After the consideration of the Executive business, a motion was made that the Senate now adjourn; when the Vice-President addressed them as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, — If, in the general apprehension of an intention to retire in that most eminent citizen, to whom all eyes had been directed, and all hearts attracted, as the centre of our Union, for so long a period, the public opinion had exhibited any clear indication of another, in whom our fellow-citizens could have generally united, as soon as I read that excellent address, which announced the necessity of deliberation in the choice of a President, I should have imitated the example of a character with whom I have coöperated, though in less conspicuous and important stations, and maintained an uninterrupted friendship, for two and twenty years. But, as a number of characters appeared to stand, in the general estimation, so nearly on a level, as to render it difficult to conjecture on which the majority would fall, considering the relation in which I stood to the people of America, I thought it most respectful to them, and most conducive to the tranquillity of the public mind, to resign myself, with others, a silent spectator of the general deliberation, and a passive subject of public discussions.

Deeply penetrated with gratitude to my countrymen in general, for their long continued kindness to me, and for that steady and affecting confidence with which those who have most intimately known me, from early life, have, on so many great occasions, intrusted to me the care of their dearest interests, since a majority of their electors, though a very small one, have

declared in my favor, and since, in a republican government, the majority, though ever so small, must of necessity decide, I have determined, at every hazard of a high but just responsibility, though with much anxiety and diffidence, once more to engage in their service. Their confidence, which has been the chief consolation of my life, is too precious and sacred a deposit ever to be considered lightly; as it has been founded only on the qualities of the heart, it never has been, it never can be, deceived, betrayed, or forfeited by me.

It is with reluctance, and with all those emotions of gratitude and affection which a long experience of your goodness ought to inspire, that I now retire from my seat in this house, and take my leave of the members of the Senate.

I ought not to declare, for the last time, your adjournment, before I have presented to every senator present, and to every citizen who has ever been a senator of the United States, my thanks for the candor and favor invariably received from them all. It is a recollection of which nothing can ever deprive me, and it will be a source of comfort to me through the remainder of my life, that as, on the one hand, in a government constituted like ours, I have for eight years held the second situation under the Constitution of the United States, in perfect and uninterrupted harmony with the first, without envy in one, or jealousy in the other, so, on the other hand, I have never had the smallest misunderstanding with any member of the Senate. In all the abstruse questions, difficult conjunctures, dangerous emergencies, and animated debates, upon the great interests of our country, which have so often and so deeply impressed all our minds, and interested the strongest feelings of the heart, I have experienced a uniform politeness and respect from every quarter of the House. When questions of no less importance than difficulty have produced a difference of sentiment, and difference of opinion will always be found in free assemblies of men, and probably the greatest diversities upon the greatest questions, when the senators have been equally divided, and my opinion has been demanded according to the Constitution, I have constantly found, in that moiety of the senators from whose judgment I have been obliged to dissent, a disposition to allow me the same freedom of deliberation, and independence of judgment which they asserted for themselves.

Within these walls, for a course of years, I have been an admiring witness of a succession of information, eloquence, patriotism, and independence, which, as they would have done honor to any Senate in any age, afford a consolatory hope (if the legislatures of the States are equally careful in their future selections, which there is no reason to distrust), that no council more permanent than this, as a branch of the legislature, will be necessary to defend the rights, liberties, and properties of the people, and to protect the Constitution of the United States, as well as the constitutions and rights of the individual States, against errors of judgment, irregularities of the passions, or other encroachments of human infirmity, or more reprehensible enterprise, in the Executive on one hand, or the more immediate representatives of the people on the other.

These considerations will all conspire to animate me, in my future course, with a confident reliance that, as far as my conduct shall be uniformly measured by the Constitution of the United States, and faithfully directed to the public good, I shall be supported by the Senate, as well as by the House of Representatives and the people at large; and on no other conditions ought any support at all to be expected or desired.

With cordial wishes for your honor, health, and happiness, and fervent prayers for a continuation of the virtues, liberties, prosperity, and peace, of our beloved country, I avail myself of your leave of absence for the remainder of the session.

THE SENATE'S ANSWER.

Wednesday, 22 February, 1797.

Sir, — The Senate of the United States would be unjust to their own feelings, and deficient in the performance of a duty their relation to the government of their country imposes, should they fail to express their regard for your person, and their respect for your character, in answer to the address you presented to them, on your leaving a station which you have so long and so honorably filled as their President.

The motives you have been pleased to disclose, which induced you not to withdraw from the public service, at a time when

your experience, talents, and virtues, were peculiarly desirable, are as honorable to yourself, as, from our confidence in you, Sir, we trust the result will be beneficial to our beloved country.

When you retired from your dignified seat in this house, and took your leave of the members of the Senate, we felt all those emotions of gratitude and affection, which our knowledge and experience of your abilities and undeviating impartiality ought to inspire; and we should, with painful reluctance, endure the separation, but for the consoling reflection, that the same qualities which have rendered you useful as the President of this branch of the legislature, will enable you to be still more so, in the exalted station to which you have been called.

From you, Sir, in whom your countrymen have for a long period placed a steady confidence, which has never been betrayed or forfeited, and to whom they have on so many occasions intrusted the care of their dearest interests, which has never been abused; from you, who, holding the second situation under the Constitution of the United States, have lived in uninterrupted harmony with him who has held the first; from you we receive with much satisfaction the declaration which you are pleased to make of the opinion you entertain of the character of the present senators, and of that of those citizens who have been heretofore senators. This declaration, were other motives wanting, would afford them an incentive to a virtuous perseverance in that line of conduct which has been honored with your approbation.

In your future course, we entertain no doubt that your official conduct will be measured by the Constitution, and directed to the public good; you have, therefore, a right to entertain a confident reliance that you will be supported, as well by the people at large, as by their constituted authorities.

We cordially reciprocate the wishes which you express for our honor, health, and happiness; we join with yours our fervent prayers for the continuation of the virtues and liberties of our fellow-citizens, for the public prosperity and peace; and for you we implore the best reward of virtuous deeds — the grateful approbation of your constituents, and the smiles of Heaven.

WILLIAM BINGHAM,
President of the Senate pro tempore.

Monday 20.th Feb.y 7. 1797.

Dear Sir

I thank you for giving me the perusal of the enclosed. - The sentiments do honor to the head & heart of the writer; - and if my wishes would be of any avail, they sh.d go [redacted] to you is a strong hope, that you will not withhold merited promotion from M.r J.n Adams because he is your son. - For without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any Body,

caution which is hinted at in the letter.-
But he is already entered;- the public, more
and more as he is known, are appreciating
his talents & worth:- and his country would
sustain a loss if these were to be checked
by over delicacy on your part.-

With sincere esteem and affectionate regard

I am ever Yours

G. Washington

THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPLY.

Thursday, 23 February, 1797.

Mr. Sedgwick reported, from the committee, that, agreeably to order, they had waited on the Vice-President of the United States, with the answer to his address on retiring from the Senate.

To which the Vice-President was pleased to make the following reply:

An address so respectful and affectionate as this, from gentlemen of such experience and established character in public affairs, high stations in the government of their country, and great consideration in their several States, as senators of the United States, will do me great honor, and afford me a firm support, wherever it shall be known, both at home and abroad. Their generous approbation of my conduct, in general, and liberal testimony to the undeviating impartiality of it, in my peculiar relation to their body, a character which, in every scene and employment of life, I should wish, above all others, to cultivate and merit, have a tendency to soften asperities, and conciliate animosities, wherever such may unhappily exist; an effect at all times to be desired, and, in the present situation of our country, ardently to be promoted by all good citizens.

I pray the Senate to accept of my sincere thanks.

JOHN ADAMS.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Monday, 20 February, 1797.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for giving me the perusal of the inclosed.[1] The sentiments do honor to the head and heart of

[1] This was a letter of John Quincy Adams to his mother, containing the following passage, relating to the new appointment he had received from General Washington: "The appointment to the mission to Portugal I find, from your letter, was, as I had before concluded, unknown to my father. I have already written you upon the subject, and I hope, my ever dear and honored mother, that you are fully convinced from my letters, which you have before this received, that upon the contingency of my father's being placed in the first magistracy, I shall never give him any trouble by solicitation for office of any kind. Your

the writer; and if my wishes would be of any avail, they should go to you in a *strong hope*, that you will not withhold merited promotion from Mr. John Adams because he is your son. For without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any others, I give it as my decided opinion that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad, and that there remains no doubt in my mind that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our diplomatic corps.

If he was *now* to be brought into *that* line, or into any other public walk, I could not, upon the principle which has regulated my own conduct, disapprove of the caution which is hinted at in the letter. But he is already entered; the public more and more, as he is known, are appreciating his talents and worth; and his country would sustain a loss, if these were to be checked by over delicacy on your part.

With sincere esteem and affectionate regard, I am, ever yours,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

THOMAS MIFFLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 3 March, 1797.

SIR, — In the year 1791, the legislature of Pennsylvania directed a house to be built for the accommodation of the President of the United States, and empowered the governor to lease the premises. As the building will be completed in the course of a few weeks, permit me to tender it for your accommodation; and to inform you that, although I regret the necessity of making any stipulation on the subject, I shall consider

late letters have repeated so many times that I shall in that case have nothing to *expect*, that I am afraid you have imagined it possible that I *might* form expectations from such an event. I had hoped that *my mother* knew me better; that she did me the justice to believe, that I have not been so totally regardless or forgetful of the principles which my education had instilled, nor so totally destitute of a *personal* sense of delicacy, as to be susceptible of a wish tending in that direction. I have, indeed, long known that my father is far more ambitious of my advancement, far more solicitous for the extension of my fame, than I ever have been, or ever shall be myself; but I have hitherto had the satisfaction to observe that the notice with which my country and the government have honored me, and the confidence which they have been pleased repeatedly to repose in me, have been without the smallest agency of my father, other than the recommendation which his services carried with them."

the rent for which you might obtain any other suitable house in Philadelphia (and which you will be pleased to mention), as a sufficient compensation for the use of the one now offered.

I take this opportunity, Sir, to present my congratulations upon your election to the office of chief magistrate of the United States; and to assure you that, as far as my constitutional powers and duties extend, you may rely upon a zealous and faithful coöperation, to advance the honor, and to insure the success of your administration.

I am, Sir, with perfect respect and esteem, &c.,

THOMAS MIFFLIN.

TO THOMAS MIFFLIN.

Philadelphia, 3 March, 1797.

SIR, — Having been out this forenoon on public business, it was not until my return, after 3 o'clock, that I received the letter you did me the honor to write me on this day.

The respect to the United States intended by the legislature of Pennsylvania in building a house for the President, will no doubt be acknowledged by the Union as it ought to be.

For your kind offer of it to me, in consequence of their authority, I pray you to accept of my respectful thanks and to present them to the legislature.

But, as I entertain great doubts whether, by a candid construction of the Constitution of the United States, I am at liberty to accept it without the intervention and authority of Congress, and as there is not time for any application to them, I must pray you to apologize for me to the legislature for declining the offer.

For your obliging congratulations on my election to the office of President of the United States, and for your kind assurances of coöperation, as far as your constitutional powers and duties extend, to advance the honor and insure the success of my administration, I pray you to accept of my best thanks and fullest assurances of a reciprocal disposition on my part towards the Governor and State of Pennsylvania.

With great respect, &c.,

JOHN ADAMS.

P. A. ADET TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphie, le 23 Ventose,
An 5ème de la République Française. 13 Mars, 1797 (V. S.)

Monsieur le Président, — J' aurois désiré pouvoir vous présenter mes hommages comme ministre de la république française. J'ose espérer que vous me permettrez de vous les offrir comme particulier. J'aurois déjà sollicité cette faveur si ma santé ne m'en eut empêché. Je ne puis plus différer de vous la demander, quoique je sois loin de me bien porter. J'ai des choses extrêmement importantes à vous communiquer. Je vous prie en conséquence de vouloir bien m'accorder un moment d'entretien. A l'heure que vous aurez la bonté de m'indiquer, je m'empresserai de me rendre auprès de vous, pour vous assurer de vive voix des sentimens de respect et de vénération que vous m'avez inspirés, et dont je vous prie d'agréer l'expression.[1]

P. A. Adet.

HENRY KNOX TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

Boston, 19 March, 1797.

My dear Sir, — I experience a reluctance in addressing you, lest I should absorb a certain portion of your time which ought to be used for more important purposes.

I doubt whether I ought to congratulate you on being elevated to the chief magistracy of the United States; for it is questionable, very questionable, whether there are not more thorns than roses in the situation. But I religiously felicitate my country on having you at the helm of government. And in doing this, I feel the operation of a certain selfishness that our Maker interwove in our construction. I feel a confidence

[1] Adet's visit was not in a public capacity. He solicited a private interview, and I consented. The purport was to clear up his character. But it was of no consequence. I shall not write about it. He is now soliciting permission to call on me to take leave before his departure. It is hardly consistent to grant it. But I won't make difficulties, and give them handles about such trifles. J. A. to his wife, 7 April.

in the safety of our political bark. The elevation was justly your due; and had any other person been chosen, the majority of the electors, in my poor opinion, would either have been ignorant of your character, or unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

Your speech on the day of your inauguration appears to have given general satisfaction.[1] The part relative to France is peculiarly pleasing, as thereon hopes are entertained that you may devise some decisive and prompt expedient to prevent that rash people from pushing us to extremities. A little further, and every principle of attachment in this country will be uprooted forever, and the public mind prepared to embrace the first opportunity of being avenged for the unprovoked outrages we are suffering.

Whether this crisis can be avoided, is, with the little information I possess, entirely uncertain. But it appears highly proper that every experiment which would afford the least hope, should be tried. If, after every effort, nothing should be found to be effective, the American people would meet with fortitude an event which could not, by their chief magistrate, be averted or controlled.

Among the expedients which have presented themselves to my mind, the one I am about to mention only seems to promise much, and I confess I should entertain considerable hopes from it. I submit it with respectful diffidence, as a suggestion which may not before perhaps have been entertained by you. Let Mr. Jefferson be sent to France as soon as possible, as envoy extraordinary, to make those explanations of our situation and disposition towards France, and of their mistakes and errors towards us, which can be done with perfect truth, and which, being told in the language of friendship by him, would most probably be acceptable. Their pride would be gratified by the mission of the Vice-President of the United States. This circumstance of rank, and the high estimation he is held in as the friend of the French revolution, would effect all the reconciliation that could possibly be effected by any measure whatever.

[1] With the exception of the extreme federalists, who, as Mr. Hamilton says, "lamented it as temporizing." See an indication of their feeling in General Schuyler's letter to Mr. Hamilton. Hamilton's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 213. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. i. p. 476, 478.

If the mission should be unsuccessful, his report, upon his return, would unite and brace the public mind to those exertions the case might require. In either event, the glory and wisdom of the measure would redound to the President of the United States, who would be considered as having done *all* that was possible to serve the interests of his country.

The measure would be highly acceptable to the great majority of the federalists, who wish peace with all the world. The party in this country, whose zeal for France has been greater than their love for the United States, would be delighted with the event. For, excepting some renegado foreigners, it cannot be supposed that many native Americans would wish to plunge their country in a war.

It may be suggested that General Pinckney's pride would be hurt by this step. I should believe the contrary. On so momentous a crisis in the affairs of his country, it would be natural for him to be pleased with the countenance of so dignified a person as the Vice-President, and one so much known and respected in France.

It may, perhaps, be further suggested that the dignity of the United States would be wounded by sending so important a character in the government on such a mission. But this objection could not be a sound one, when the magnitude of the measure should be considered, and that the chief justice was employed in a similar case. But the dignity of character is an important requisite in the mission. I entertain so good an opinion of Mr. Jefferson's patriotism, as to believe he would not hesitate, and much less refuse the offer.

The motive which has induced this suggestion is as pure as it is respectful to you. I know not the reasons which might be urged against its adoption. But there may exist just and insuperable objections, with which I am unacquainted. Every political measure is susceptible of various views, and it is the duty of good citizens to repose themselves with confidence under the protection of their government. No person possesses this confidence in a greater degree than I do in the present instance, and there is no one who wishes more sincerely that your administration may be prosperous to your country and glorious to yourself. I am, Sir, with perfect respect, &c.

HENRY KNOX.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Philadelphia, 30 March, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I received with much pleasure your favor of the 19th. If I should meet with any roses in my path, I shall thank you for your congratulations, and when I set my foot on thorns, as I certainly shall, I shall thank you equally for your condolence; but when you assure me that you feel a confidence in the safety of our political bark, you give me much comfort, and I pray you may not be disappointed.

It is a delicate thing for me to speak of the late election. To myself, personally, "my election" might be a matter of indifference or rather of aversion. Had Mr. Jay, or some others, been in question, it might have less mortified my vanity, and infinitely less alarmed my apprehensions for the public. But to see such a character as Jefferson, and much more such an unknown being as Pinckney, brought over my head, and trampling on the bellies of hundreds of other men infinitely his superiors in talents, services, and reputation, filled me with apprehensions for the safety of us all. It demonstrated to me that, if the project succeeded, our Constitution could not have lasted four years. We should have been set afloat, and landed, the Lord knows where.[1] That must be a sordid people, indeed — a people destitute of a sense of honor, equity, and character, that could submit to be governed, and see hundreds of its most meritorious public men governed, by a Pinckney, under an elective government. Hereditary government, when it imposes young, new, inexperienced men upon the public, has its compensations and equivalent, but elective government has none. I mean by this no disrespect to Mr. Pinckney. I believe him to be a worthy man. I speak only by comparison with others.

I have it much at heart to settle all disputes with France, and nothing shall be wanting on my part to accomplish it, excepting a violation of our faith and a sacrifice of our honor. But old as I am, war is, even to me, less dreadful than iniquity or deserved disgrace. Nothing can be done of much moment,

[1] This experiment has not been found dangerous in the later history of the country. It bids fair to become the rule and not the exception.

in the way even of negotiation, without the Senate, and nothing else without Congress.

Your project has been long ago considered and determined on. Mr. Jefferson would not go. His reasons are obvious; he has a station assigned him by the nation, which he has no right to quit, nor have I any right, perhaps, to call him from it. I may hereafter communicate to you, what I have never communicated to any other, what has passed upon the subject. The circumstance of rank is too much. We shall never be respected in Europe while we confound ranks in this manner. In their eyes, the chief justice was too much to send to England. I have plans in contemplation that I dare say will satisfy you when they come to be developed. I regret the time that must be lost before the senate and representatives can assemble.

If we wish not to be degraded in the eyes of foreigners, we must not degrade ourselves. What would have been thought in Europe, if the King of France had sent Monsieur, his eldest brother, as an envoy? What of the King of England, if he had sent the Prince of Wales? Mr. Jefferson is, in essence, in the same situation. He is the first prince of the country, and the heir apparent to the sovereign authority, *quoad hoc*. His consideration in France is nothing. They consider nobody but themselves. Their apparent respect and real contempt for all men and all nations but Frenchmen, are proverbial among themselves. They think it is in their power to give characters and destroy characters as they please, and they have no other rule but to give reputation to their tools, and to destroy the reputation of all who will not be their tools. Their efforts to "*popularise*" Jefferson, and to "*dépopulariser*" Washington, are all upon this principle. To a Frenchman the most important man in the world is himself, and the most important nation is France. He thinks that France ought to govern all nations, and that he ought to govern France. Every man and nation that agrees to this, he is willing to "*popularise*"; every man or nation that disputes or doubts it, he will "*dépopulariser*," if he can.

This is all in confidence from, Sir, your most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. Q. ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 31 March, 1797.

My dear Son, — Mr. Murray, of Maryland, your old friend, with whom you formed your first acquaintance at the Hague, is to succeed you.[1] That gentleman has been so long a member of Congress, and has given such proofs of talents, amiable dispositions, and patriotic sentiments, as qualify him to do honor to the mission, as well as to his predecessor. It would have been enough to have said that he is well chosen to fill the place; for I have the best authority, besides my private opinion, to say, that no place has been better filled than that at the Hague, since your appointment to that mission.

You sometimes hint an inclination to return to America, and nothing would give me greater pleasure, on certain suppositions; but, my son, independence is essential to self-esteem as well as to command the esteem of others, and where is your independence? If you would return to the bar, you might be independent, I grant, but I would not advise you to return to America yet; go to Lisbon,[2] and send me as good intelligence from all parts of Europe as you have done.

My entrance into office is marked by a misunderstanding with France, which I shall endeavor to reconcile, provided that no violation of faith, no stain upon honor, is exacted. But if infidelity, dishonor, or too much humiliation is demanded, France shall do as she pleases, and take her own course. America is not SCARED.

The multiplicity of business in which I am involved is no otherwise irksome to me than as it may endanger my health; but I have great confidence in my saddle.

I pray you to write me as often as you can.

I am your affectionate father,

John Adams.

[1] In Holland.

[2] Mr. J. Q. Adams had been appointed by President Washington to go as minister to Portugal.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 6 April, 1797.

Dear Sir, — Your favor of the 27th ultimo gave me great pleasure. The proposal of appointing the Vice-President to go as envoy extraordinary to Paris, has arrived from so many quarters, that I presume the thought is a natural one. I will tell you a secret, but I wish you to keep it a secret in your own breast. I was so impressed with the idea myself, that on the 3d of March I had a conversation with Mr. Jefferson, in which I proposed it to him, and frankly declared to him, that if he would accept it, I would nominate him the next day, as soon as I should be qualified to do it. He as frankly refused, as I expected he would.[1] Indeed, I made a great stretch in proposing it, to accommodate to the feelings, views, and prejudices of a party. I would not do it again, because, upon more mature reflection, I am decidedly convinced of the impropriety of it. The reasons you give are unanswerable, but there are others. It would be a degradation of our government in the eyes of our own people, as well as of all Europe. The Vice-President, in our Constitution, is too high a personage to be sent on diplomatic errands, even in the character of an ambassador. We cannot work miracles. We cannot make nations respect our nation, or its government, if we place before their eyes the persons answering to the first princes of the government, in the low and subordinate character of a foreign minister. It must be a pitiful country indeed, in which the second man in the nation will accept of a place upon a footing with the *corps diplomatique*, especially envoy such a one, ambassador such a one, or plenipotentiary such a one. The nation must hold itself very cheap, that can choose a man one day to hold its second office, and the next

[1] Mr. Jefferson has given his account of this conference in his *Ana*. It seems to have been drawn up in 1818, from recollections associated with a memorandum made at the time. But no means are furnished by which to distinguish the original from the additions. He mentions Madison, Gerry, and Pinckney, as the three persons named for the mission.

Mr. Adams gave, in 1809, his version of the same conference, formed much in the same way, excepting that his original memoranda date in 1801, four years later. He mentions Madison or Jefferson as one of the three, though he speaks of other characters having been considered in the course of the conversation; and this exactly conforms to the earlier record.

send him to Europe, to dance attendance at levees and drawing rooms, among the common major-generals, simple bishops, earls, and barons, but especially among the common trash of ambassadors, envoys, and ministers plenipotentiary.

The nation has chosen Jefferson, and commanded him to a certain station. The President, therefore, has no right to command him to another, or to take him off from that. A nation, to be consistent, must highly resent it. It appeared to me in this light, when the mission to England was talked of; two or three persons proposed to me to go, but I positively refused to have any thing said about it, and gave the reasons above, among many others.[1] Indeed, I thought it wrong to send the chief

[1] The date of this letter relieves the statement here made from all suspicion of especial motive. It thus forms a complete answer to a charge made three years later by Mr. Hamilton in his well known attack upon Mr. Adams. In that pamphlet is an attempt to connect with a private letter, made public by a violation of confidence on the part of Tench Coxe, an imputation of unworthy motives in writing it, which is the only circumstance that gives the affair any importance. It now clearly appears that Mr. Hamilton was mistaken. Yet, inasmuch as an impression seems to have prevailed elsewhere than with Mr. Hamilton, that Mr. Adams, against the uniform tenor of his preceding life, and contrary to all probabilities, had solicited the mission to England at the time here spoken of, it will not be out of place to add to this letter to Mr. Gerry, bearing date three years before the charge was thought of, an extract from a fragment written in 1801, originally intended as an answer to Mr. Hamilton, touching the same point.

"It is scarcely conceivable in what this assertion originated. There has been no moment since Mr. Adams's return to America, that he would have accepted an appointment to England on any terms. He returned weary and satiated with the diplomatic course. He returned voluntarily. There is little doubt his commission would have been renewed to the court of London, if he had desired it. But so far from wishing it, he resigned all his commissions in Europe, and instead of asking leave to return home, he wrote the then Secretary of State, Mr. Jay, that he was determined to return." . . . .

"Mr. Adams had also other reasons against any appointment abroad, and these were the same that President Washington suggested, according to Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Adams, however, never knew till he read it in this pamphlet, that the thought had ever occurred or been proposed to President Washington."

[The letter to Mr. Jay, above referred to, is found in this volume, p. 424.]

"The only circumstance which Mr. Adams can recollect, connected with this subject, is this. A gentleman once came to him and said, that he had come to propose to him a thing that appeared to him in a very serious light. A negotiation was in contemplation with England. The people and Congress were anxious. Some gentlemen of the Senate, one in particular, had desired him to see the Vice-President and propose to him to accept an appointment, and by way of inducement said that Mr. Adams would have an unanimous vote in the Senate. Mr. A. laughed at the idea of an unanimous vote, and said that he knew his own station in society so well as to know that unanimous votes were luxuries which were never to fall to his lot. That, in some former parts of his life, he had tasted the delicious flavor; but it was never to gratify his palate again.

justice; he was too high to go, even as an ambassador; but to send him as envoy, was unpardonable; it must mark us with contempt in all Europe. But we studiously degrade our government, by every ingenious invention, and then wonder that our nation and government are despised.

The satisfaction you express with my little harangue, before taking the oath, gives me great pleasure. I had been so abused, belied, and misrepresented, for seven years together, without uttering one syllable in my own vindication, and almost without one word in my favor from anybody else, that I was determined to give the lie direct to whole volumes at once, be the consequence what it would.

I am, my dear Sir, with great respect,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, 14 April, 1797.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of State[1] to take into his consideration the following questions,[2] and make report of his opinion in writing, viz.:

1. Whether the refusal to receive Mr. Pinckney, and the rude orders to quit Paris and the territory of the republic, with such circumstances of indignity, insult, and hostility, as we have been informed of, are bars to all further measures of negotiation. Or, in other words, will a fresh mission to Paris be too great a humiliation of the American people in their own sense and that of the world?

2. If another mission be admissible, can any part, and what parts, or articles, of the treaty of amity and commerce with

But he said to the gentleman, that he absolutely forbid his name to be mentioned on the occasion, for that he would refuse it, if he should be nominated, even if the miracle should be wrought in the Senate of an unanimous vote in his favor; and he assigned the same reasons which are hinted at above."

[1] The same form addressed to the Secretaries of the Treasury and of War, and the Attorney-General.

[2] It has been affirmed that Mr. Adams decided all questions with little regard to his cabinet. The sequel will show that although he settled principles for himself, he was elaborate in the submission of all the details to their consideration, and ready to follow their advice so long as his confidence in them lasted.

Great Britain be offered to France, or ultimately conceded to that power in case of necessity, if demanded by her?

3. What articles of the treaty of alliance, and of the treaty of commerce, with France, should be proposed to be abolished?

4. Whether it will be prudent to say anything concerning the consular convention with that power, and, if it will, what alterations in it should be proposed?

5. Whether any new articles, such as are not contained in either of our treaties with France or England, shall be proposed, or can be agreed to, if proposed by the French government?

6. What documents shall be prepared to send to France, as evidence of insult and injuries committed against the commerce of the United States by French ships of war or privateers, or by French commissioners, agents, officers, or citizens?

7. In what terms shall remonstrances against spoliations of property, capture of vessels, imprisonment of masters and mariners, cruelties, insults, and abuses of every kind to our citizens, be made?

8. In what terms shall restitution, reparation, compensation, and satisfaction, be demanded for such insults and injuries?

9. Shall demand be made of payment to our citizens for property purchased by the French government in Europe, or in the East and West Indies?

10. Shall demand be made of the French government of payment for vessels and cargoes captured and seized, whether by ships of war or private ships?

11. Shall any commission of inquiry and examination, like that with England, be agreed to?

12. What articles in the British treaty can be offered to France without compensation, and what with compensation, and what compensation shall be demanded?

13. Shall a project of a new treaty, abolishing the old treaties and consular convention, be proposed to France?

14. Shall such a project, with a project of instructions to the minister, be proposed and laid before the Senate for their advice and consent before they be sent to Europe?[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] It is to be regretted that the limits of this work will not permit of the insertion of the opinions of the cabinet officers, often quite long, upon the various topics on which they were consulted by Mr. Adams. In the present

THOMAS MIFFLIN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 12 May, 1797.

Sir, — By an act of the general assembly of this State, it has become my duty to purchase and import ten thousand stand of arms, for the use of the militia; but I find that it will be impracticable, at present, to form an advantageous contract, unless I can promise the interference of the American ministers in Europe, to obtain permission from the respective governments for exporting the arms either from Great Britain, Holland, or Hamburg; and unless I can obtain from the United States a remission of the duties on importation. As the object is of

instance, in particular, though the first to develop the difference of policy between the President and the two principal ministers, which afterwards caused the disruption of the cabinet, it is only possible to give a meagre abstract of their views. It should be borne in mind, that they had been at first decidedly opposed to any further measures of a conciliatory character towards France, that in this they had been overruled by the President, and that they had found no support for their opinion in the quarter to which they habitually looked for direction — Mr. Hamilton. But for this accidental coincidence in the views of the President and Mr. Hamilton, it is not unlikely that the breach would have commenced at this moment, so little did the ministers feel under any obligations to sympathise with the responsible head of the administration.

Mr. Wolcott's answer to the above questions is to be found at large in Mr. Gibbs's "*Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams*," vol. i. pp. 502–517, a work more valuable for the original documents it contains, than for the spirit in which it is written.

The answer of Mr. Pickering is equally long, but much less ambiguous. It advocates further negotiation, as decidedly demanded by the country, but it would dispense with all "*fraternizing* words." It points out certain alterations in the former treaties with France, which might be made as concessions, to place her more on the same footing on which Great Britain had been placed by Jay's treaty; and specifies others, as demands to be made of her. The 9th, 10th, and 11th questions are answered affirmatively; the following ones in the negative. To the 14th and last, involving an important principle, he says:

"A project of *instructions* for negotiating a treaty with Spain, was laid before the Senate in 1792, and approved. The peculiar situation of the United States, and especially of the executive branch of the government, in relation to France, would render our adoption of that precedent highly expedient, if we could trust to the fidelity of *all* the members of the Senate. There was no inducement of passions or interest to betray the instructions to Spain; but any instructions, alike communicated, for negotiating a new treaty with France, would reach the Directory sooner than we could send them to our minister."

Mr. McHenry is still more decided for further negotiation, and for an offer to modify every commercial inequality between France and England. He is adverse to any changes in the old treaties with France, excepting only the mutual guaranties. He answers the 4th question in the negative. To the 6th, he proposes the same course pursued in the case of Great Britain. To the 7th, he recommends mild and calm terms. He proposes in the ninth case, that the claims

national importance and utility, I take the liberty of requesting that you will favor me with your sanction upon the first point, and that you will be pleased to submit the second point to the consideration of Congress.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.,

THOMAS MIFFLIN.

be urged, but not demanded. He takes the affirmative of the 10th and 11th, the negative of the 13th and 14th questions, and concludes by saying:

"In the exercise of this branch of executive power, it will be found the best course to reduce the coöperation of the Senate to the appointment of the negotiator and the ultimate *fiat* or *negative*. Much, I believe, has been already done to this end, and it may not, for any partial reason, be expedient to relinquish the ground which has been gained."

Mr. Lee favors a new mission, and every equalization of commercial rights between the United States and France and England, even to the surrender of the principle of *free ships, free goods*, in the French treaty. He also suggests changes in the old treaties; thinks a discussion of the consular convention not necessary, but, if entered into at all, proposes modifications. He thinks the terms used in remonstrance should be those of candor and conciliation, but explicit, argumentative, and independent. The demands for reparation should also be moderate and reasonable. The 9th question is answered in the negative. The 10th and 11th, in the affirmative. In reply to the 12th, he suggests the offer made in his answer to the first, France retaining her priority of date as to all articles in the treaties of 1778 not modified. He favors the idea of abolishing these treaties, but would not propose it to France. Lastly he says "no" to the 14th question, for three reasons, the third of which is, —

"Because no project consistent with the honor and interest of this country can be proposed at this time, which will be satisfactory to the Senate and to France too. They are so wide in their ideas and principles, that if ever they meet it must be in process of time, which is constantly producing new events. A project of this kind, then, if laid before the Senate and approved by them, would increase the chance of disappointment in the mission, in proportion as the powers of negotiation are restrained and the sentiments of the Senate are publicly known."

"In the critical situation of things the best mode seems to be to communicate, in explicit instructions, what stipulations the envoy may make, and what he must not agree to, if proposed by France."

The aversion of two of the cabinet officers to the very proposal of a mission is now clearly seen in their own letters. Mr. Hamilton was obliged to speak plainly, to check them. On the 30th of March he wrote thus to Wolcott:

"I ought, my good friend, to apprise you, for you may learn it from no other, that a suspicion begins to *dawn* among the friends of the government, that the *actual* administration is not much averse from war with France. How very important to obviate this!"

It also appears from the Hamilton papers that Mr. Pickering had already received from the President a check upon his eagerness to accumulate matter for irritation with France in advance of the assembling of Congress; that he immediately and secretly appealed from this judgment to Mr. Hamilton, who in reply hesitatingly counselled acquiescence. This was done in less than four weeks after Mr. Adams's induction into office. See the letters between these parties, indicating their disposition at this time. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 219, 226, 229, 239, 246, 249.

TO THOMAS MIFFLIN.

Philadelphia, 22 May, 1797.

Sir, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me, on the 12th of this month, and have maturely considered the subject of it.

The substance of your Excellency's first request is, that I would instruct the American ministers in Europe to use their influence to obtain permission from the respective governments for exporting from Great Britain, Holland, or Hamburg, ten thousand stands of arms, for the use of the militia of Pennsylvania. As this request appears to me to be reasonable and proper, I shall readily and cheerfully comply with it, whenever your Excellency shall be pleased to indicate to me, or to the Secretary of State, the names of the agents proposed to be employed.

Your Excellency's second request is, that, as the proposed importation is an object of national utility, I would submit to the consideration of Congress the expediency of a remission of the duties payable on such importation.

On this point, permit me respectfully to observe, that the recommendations of the President to Congress have commonly related to measures of general policy, and a deviation from this rule may be attended with inconvenience; that an exemption on arms imported for a particular State would operate as a grant to that State, and ought, of course, to be provided for by a special law.

Of the policy of recommending a general repeal of the duties on arms imported into the United States, doubts are entertained, as a manufacture would thereby be discouraged, which it is the public interest to support and encourage.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.,

John Adams.

[1] This letter to Governor Mifflin had been submitted to the Secretary of the Treasury, and his report, dated on the 19th of May, concurred in by the Secretary of State, is incorporated almost entire in this reply.

TO J. Q. ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 2 June, 1797.

My dear Son, — I know not whether I may not have incommoded you, and disappointed your plans, by the alteration I have made in your destination. The mission to Portugal appeared to me to be less important to the United States than a mission to Prussia. The north of Europe, at present, is more interesting to us than the south; the neutral powers of Denmark, Sweden, and Prussia, seem to be naturally more allied, by sympathy, at least, with us neutrals than others, and I thought your talents, sagacity, and industry might be more profitably exerted in collecting and transmitting intelligence of the views and designs of those courts and nations, than they could be in Lisbon, where there will be little to do, that I can foresee, besides sleeping *siestas*. The treaty with Prussia is to be renewed, and after you shall have completed that, you will inform me whether you choose to remain at Berlin, or go to Sweden or Denmark. I would not advise you to make any permanent establishment at Berlin, but keep yourself in a posture to remove to some other court, when you shall have renewed the treaty.

I hope your new commission will reach you before you leave Holland or England; but if, unfortunately, you shall be at Lisbon, there is no remedy, and you must submit to the trouble of removing again to Prussia.

The part which the King of Prussia means to take, either during the war, or at and after the peace, and what his relations are to be in future towards France and England, will be important for us to know. The Emperor of all the Russias, too, and the Emperor of Germany, are important luminaries for the political telescope to observe. In short, what is to be the future system of Europe, and how we best can preserve friendship with them all, and be most useful to them all, are speculations and inquiries worthy of your head and heart. You have wisely taken all Europe for your theatre, and I hope will continue to do as you have done. Send us all the information you can collect. I wish you to continue your practice of writing freely to me, and cautiously to the office of State. My love to your brother. Your affectionate father,

John Adams.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 20 June, 1797.

My dear Friend, — I have this moment written a message to the Senate, nominating you to be an envoy extraordinary to the French republic. Knowing, as I did, Mr. Dana's aversion to the sea, and his continual dread of his mother's fate, I was always apprehensive he would decline, and should have nominated you at first, if I had not been overruled by the opinions of many gentlemen, that Mr. Dana's experience in this line, and especially his title of chief justice, would be great advantages in France, as well as among our people in America.[1] I know you must make a sacrifice, but I sincerely hope you will not disappoint me. I should be very happy to see you here, before you embark. Mr. Marshall accepts, and will be here in a week from this day.

The voyage, I am confident, will be for your health. My compliments to Mrs. Gerry. Tell her she must not object. If she cannot accompany you, she must sacrifice a little, as Mrs. Adams did before for six years. I pray you to let me hear from you as soon and as often as possible.

I am your sincere friend,

John Adams.

TO URIAH FORREST.

Philadelphia, 20 June, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I received yesterday your favor of the 23rd, and am very much obliged to you for it. The paper inclosed in it is a serious thing. It will be a motive, in addition to many others, for me to be upon my guard. It is evidence of a mind, soured, yet seeking for popularity, and eaten to a honeycomb with ambition, yet weak, confused, uninformed, and

[1] Mr. Adams delicately avoids to state the main reason, which was the resistance of his cabinet officers to the nomination. Which of these parties, — Mr. Gerry, or the reluctant officers, — proved, by their conduct, the most to have deserved his confidence, is for posterity to judge, from the evidence presented to it, without partiality or prejudice.

ignorant. I have been long convinced that this ambition is so inconsiderate as to be capable of going great lengths. I shall carefully keep the secret, as far as it may compromise characters and names.[1]

It would afford me great pleasure to make a visit to the city of Washington, Mount Vernon, Georgetown, &c.; but the summer will be a busy one, and my own health, as well as that of your friend Mrs. Adams, will oblige us to go northward, if we stir from Pennsylvania this year.

I receive very kindly your offer to communicate information to me from time to time. I shall stand in need of it from all quarters, and shall receive it from none with more pleasure.

I am, Sir, with great esteem, &c.

John Adams.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 8 July, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I wrote you a line, yesterday, but was so busy I could not enlarge. The Secretary of State will send you your instructions, and as ample a collection of documents as we can prepare. Mr. Marshall will sail next week; but you may reach Amsterdam from Boston as early as he will, though you cannot sail so soon. There is the utmost necessity of harmony, complaisance, and condescension among the three envoys, and unanimity is of great importance. In such a negotiation the attention should be to the great objects, and smaller matters must sometimes be yielded or neglected.

It is my sincere desire that an accommodation may take place; but our national faith, and the honor of our government, cannot be sacrificed. You have known enough of the un-

1 General Forrest had communicated to Mr. Adams, from memory, having heard it read, the substance of one of the many letters circulated at this time by Mr. Jefferson, under the strongest injunctions that no copy should be allowed to be taken. It is worth while to contrast the opinion here expressed of Mr. J. with the uneasiness felt by Mr. Hamilton and his friends lest Mr. Adams should be *led* by that gentleman. Fortunate would it have been for all the parties, if the idea of *leading* Mr. Adams had not been always uppermost in their minds! *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 192, 206.

pleasant effects of disunion among ministers to convince you of the necessity of avoiding it, like a rock or quicksand.

There have been many instances of three ambassadors at a time. The Dutch at Munster had eight. In modern times they have not been common, and in this case, it ought to be considered by the French, as it will be considered by the world, as a great compliment and a signal mark of respect.

I wish you to get acquainted at Amsterdam with our bankers there, Messrs. Willink and Van Staphorst, and in France, if you are received there, to inquire into the conduct and character of our late and present consuls, and their inferior agents, and to find out what kind of speculations have been carried on there. You will see that Mr. Blount, the senator, has been speculating with the English, but some suspect this to be only a feint, and that the real design was upon France or Spain, or both. Swan, Hichborne, Edwards, &c., in connection with others in this country, have been speculating, and I fear these speculators have done this country no good.

As to our being a divided people, all nations are divided. France is divided; so are Holland, England, Italy, and Germany. There will ever be parties and divisions in all nations; but our people will support their government, and so will the French theirs. Not to expect divisions in a free country, would be an absurdity.

It is probable there will be manœuvres practised to excite jealousies among you, both by Americans, English, Dutch, and French; this should not produce too much irritation, but should press you closer together. You will hear a great deal of affected contempt, as well as a great deal of affected esteem and admiration of America. Neither should affect you much. But I cannot enlarge. I wish Mrs. Gerry health and comfort, and that you may acquire glory enough to compensate for all your cares.

N. B. I must give you a hint about economy. I would be as plain and cheap as possible in dress, equipage, lodgings, livery, and every thing. I would not give many feasts to Americans. Decorum must be observed. You will be surrounded with projectors and swindlers. You will not be deceived by them.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 17 July, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have this moment received your letter of the 10th. That man must have more skill in intrigue than any that I have been acquainted with, who can sap the foundation of the confidence I have in Mr. Gerry.[1] No such attempt has been made; all have confessed to me your honor and integrity. Some have expressed doubts of your orthodoxy in the science of government; others have expressed fears of an unaccommodating disposition, and others of an obstinacy that will risk great things to secure small ones. Some have observed that there is, at present, a happy and perfect harmony among all our ministers abroad, and have expressed apprehensions that your appointment might occasion an interruption of it. But all those intimations made no impression upon me. Since your appointment all have acquiesced, and there has never been a word lisped in conversation or in writing against it. Not one appointment I have yet made has given better satisfaction. It is of great importance that harmony should be preserved among all our ministers abroad, and I am determined that no *Randolph* appointments shall be made by me. I sincerely wish peace and friendship with the French; but, while they countenance none but enemies of our Constitution and administration, and vilify every friend of either, self-defence, as well as fidelity to the public, will compel me to have a care what appointments I make.

General Marshall took leave of me last night, and sails to-day in the Grace, Captain Willis, for Amsterdam. He is a plain man, very sensible, cautious, guarded, and learned in the law of nations. I think you will be pleased with him. You will arrive in Amsterdam as soon, or sooner than he will. The Secretary of State will send you all the documents you may want.

I am, dear Sir, with best wishes for your pleasant voyage, successful negotiation, and glorious return, your friend,

John Adams.

[1] "I shall rely on your candor and goodness, for a fair opportunity of removing every impression, which in this age of intrigue and illiberality might be attempted, to sap the foundation of your confidence in me. I do not know that the attempt will be made, but must expect my share of political persecution." Extract. E. Gerry to John Adams, 10 July.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 25 August, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have received, in course, your favors of July 28th, August 1st, 3d, and 17th. That of July 28th only inclosed a letter from Mr. Gerry.

The Mediterranean passports, mentioned in your letter of August 1st, I signed, as soon as possible, and returned them to you in three packets by the post.

I saw Mr. Howell at Boston, Providence, and Quincy; but as he said nothing to me on the subject of his salary, I thought it unnecessary for me to mention it to him. The commissioners have now adjourned for another year.

I have read the deposition of James Wallis, and the letter of Judge Sitgreaves,[1] inclosed in yours of August 3d. The measures you have taken, are the most prudent that could have been taken, I believe; and no proclamation appears to be necessary for the present. A proclamation would excite and spread alarms, and make more of the thing than there appears to be in it. It is very strange that the officers of justice cannot make discoveries and obtain evidence, if there are facts. When witnesses talk about agitations and prevailing reports, it may be ground for inquiry to an attorney-general. But, certainly, armies cannot be levied without witnesses; and witnesses may prove crimes; and crimes may be punished, unless our country is abandoned of God.

With great regard, &c.

John Adams.

P. S. I thank you for sending the brigantine Sophia to the relief of our suffering seamen.[2]

[1] The letter and deposition gave notice to the government of enlistments making in North Carolina for some secret purpose. Mr. Pickering, in his letter, says:

"I answered the Judge that the papers would be submitted to your consideration; and that, perhaps, you might think it proper to issue a proclamation to check the evil, and warn the people of their danger."

"I shall write advice of this discovery to the judges and district attorneys of South Carolina and Georgia, and probably to the governors of the three southern States, that they coöperate in counteracting such pernicious designs. The instructions, given by the Secretary of War to the officer commanding the troops in Tennessee, may supersede the necessity of any other measures. And, by all these steps, perhaps a proclamation may be rendered unnecessary."

[2] This is in answer to Mr. Pickering's letter of the 17th, in which he says:

"Recent intelligence of the wretched condition of numbers of our seamen,

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 26 August, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have received your letter of August 21st, and the packet from Colonel Moultrie, of South Carolina. The subject is so voluminous that I have not yet had time to read all the pamphlets. The letter I have read.[1] I must refer him to you and the attorney-general, to consider whether my first opinion is right or not, which is, that application must be made to the legislature, and that the executive power is not, by the Constitution or any act of Congress, adequate to the business.

I ought, indeed, first to have acknowledged the receipt of your favor of the 19th. I had considered, as maturely as I could, the characters and pretensions of all the candidates, and had informed the attorney-general of the result, and had requested him, in case Mr. Hall should decline, to consider John Read as appointed, and employ him immediately. I now request you to make out and present him his commission.[2] Mr. Hopkinson never applied, to my knowledge, till after Mr. Hall's refusal. Though he is personally unknown to me, I have formed a good opinion of his talents, disposition, and principles, and might have hesitated longer, if his application had been in season. But, from your representation, as well as other considerations, I see no reason to alter my determination, communicated to Mr. Lee with his approbation. Mr. Read, I think, ought to be appointed.

John Adams.

cast ashore, by French privateers, at St. Jago de Cuba (a place of no trade), who for want of means of returning, were constrained to enter on board the privateers, joined to the former accounts of the ill treatment of others and their imprisonment by Victor Hugues, determined me, with the concurrence of the Secretary of War, to send the Sophia on this voyage without more delay. She will sail this day."

[1] It contained an offer to convey to the United States the title to a large tract of land in Georgia.

[2] As agent of the United States, before the Board of Commissioners upon British debts.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

East Chester, 12 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I arrived here, at Colonel Smith's, last night with my family, and I shall make this house my home till we can go to Philadelphia with safety. Even if we should be obliged to convene Congress at any other place than Philadelphia, it will be better for Mrs. Adams to remain here with her daughter than to go with me into lodgings.

I pray you to give me your opinion whether it will be expedient to convene Congress at any other place than the usual one, and if it is, whether New York is not the only convenient place. I have assisted in Congress at Trenton, Lancaster, Yorktown, and Baltimore, and know by experience that even tolerable accommodations are scarcely to be obtained at the three first, and the last is as much infected at present as Philadelphia. A proclamation, too, must be thought on and prepared. If you address your letters to me at East Chester, and recommend them to the care of Charles Adams, Esq., at New York, I shall get them without much loss of time; but if a mail could be made up for East Chester, they might come sooner. I know not whether this can be done without appointing a postmaster at this place, and I know of no one to recommend.

In a former letter I requested you to commit to paper, minutes, as usual, of matters to be communicated and recommended to Congress at the opening of the session, and I now repeat the request. I rejoice that I am now within a hundred miles of you, that the communications between us may be more frequent, and that, in case of urgency, we may soon meet here or at Trenton, or at some intermediate place.

There is a law or resolve, requesting the President to write to the governors of the States, for information whether they have adopted the amendment of the Constitution relative to the suability of States. I know not but you may have executed this resolution; if not, I beg you would write without loss of time, lest a noise should be made at the opening of the next session, and we should be charged with neglect of duty.

John Adams.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

East Chester, 14 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — Your favor of the 7th, and the duplicate of it, and that of the 9th, with their inclosures, I received last night.

Dr. Rush has so many motives to wish that Congress may assemble in Philadelphia, that his testimony must be weighed with certain grains of allowance. It is but a small consolation to the senators and representatives of the United States, to say that the malignant contagion is but little spread in the city, and is chiefly confined to Southwark, since the inhabitants of Southwark, as well as Philadelphia, will have power to fill the galleries of both Houses, and bring their infection with them. Such is the aversion of the eastern members to the idea of going to Philadelphia on the second Monday in November, that I am confident there will not be a quorum of either House for many weeks after it. The members will be scattered, some at home, and some at taverns on the road, and some in Philadelphia, all in a very disagreeable, awkward, and uncertain situation. Will it not be better, then, by convening Congress at New York, to give them an opportunity of judging for themselves of the proper time, and making the adjournment to Philadelphia their own act?

The letter from Mr. William Turnbull, of Carlisle, soliciting the treasury of the mint, and Mr. Bassett's letter recommending Dr. James Sykes to the same office, I return to you, that you may file together all the applications and recommendations for that appointment, and deliver them to me when we meet to determine the question.

I thank you for writing to Mr. Hodgdon[1] on the necessity of additional night watches. I am afraid my house will stand a worse chance of escaping the speculations of the villains than any others; but I know not what can be done to secure it, more than has been done. A sentinel at the door, if such a watch could be hired, would frighten the people of Philadelphia more than the plague.

Santhonax's departure for France will be no relief to our

[1] President of the city council of Philadelphia. An attempt had been made to break open the house.

commerce, nor will any negotiations going on, or treaties we can make, until our vessels arm in their own defence. This is my opinion. I wish I may be deceived; but I believe all Frenchmen are of opinion with my old friend, the Abbé de Mably, who once said to me: "Il n'y a point de morale pour un homme qui meurt de faim." They will all, I believe, agree in this, though you and I shall not, and add, at least in practice, "Il n'y a point de traité pour une nation qui meurt de faim." I am afraid they will cure our people of their too fond attachments, if they have any, by very harsh remedies.

I shall divide my time between New York and East Chester till the meeting of Congress. Your letters, to the care of my son, will soon reach me, and the more there are of them the better.

With great regard, &c.

John Adams.

TO O. WOLCOTT, JR., SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

East Chester, 20 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have received your favor of the 16th.[1] Thank you for your care in writing to Mr. Sands, who has furnished me with two thousand dollars, for which I gave him duplicate receipts, to serve for one, according to your desire. Though I rejoice to learn from your letter that the sickness in the city is diminishing, I cannot admit your walk through the principal streets of it to be full proof, because it is generally agreed that the principal streets are deserted by the inhabitants.

You remember the anxieties and alarms among the members of Congress in 1793, their continual regret that no power had existed to convene them elsewhere, and their solicitude to pass an act to provide an authority in future. There will be so much uneasiness among them, if that authority is not exerted, that there will probably be no Congress formed before Christmas, and a few who will venture into the city will be there in idleness and out of their element.

[1] This letter is printed in Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. i. p. 568.

I thank you for the sentiments you have expressed relative to the system to be pursued. Can you send me a copy of the speech at the commencement of last session? I have no copy of it here, and perhaps shall find it difficult to procure one. I should be glad, however, to know your opinion, whether our envoys will be received or not, whether they will succeed or not; with hints at your reasons, if any intelligence has furnished any.

The organization of the stamp tax suggests a vexation to me. The bill was worth money, and money was so much wanted for the public service, that I would not put it at risk; otherwise I would have negatived that bill; not from personal feelings, for I care not a farthing for all the personal power in the world. But the office of the secretary of the treasury is, in that bill, premeditatedly set up as a rival to that of the President;[1] and that policy will be pursued, if we are not on our guard, till we have a quintuple or a centuple executive directory, with all the Babylonish dialect which modern pedants most affect.

I pray you to continue to write me as often as possible.[2]

With high esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, JR., SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

East Chester, 26 October, 1797.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favor of the 20th, and thank you for your vigilant attention to the progress, or rather to the decline, of the fever in Philadelphia.

I request your explicit opinion, and pray you, if you can, to obtain those of Mr. McHenry and Mr. Lee, whether, from the prevalence of contagious sickness in Philadelphia, or the existence of any other circumstances, it would be hazardous to the

[1] In the original organization of the departments, a remarkable variation from the general system of accountability to the President had been made in the case of the secretary of the treasury, who has ever since made his reports directly to the legislature, and not under the supervision of the President. Mr. Adams appears to have considered this measure as another step in the same direction.

[2] Mr. Wolcott's reply is to be found in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. i. p. 571. He promised an argument on the last topic, but he never sent it. There is an opinion given upon it by the attorney-general, in which he quotes five precedents, without perceiving that these might be used as confirming the President's view.

lives or health of the members of Congress to meet in that city on the second Monday in November. If you cannot, with very clear consciences, answer in the negative, I shall issue a proclamation convening Congress at New York. For myself, I have no apprehension of danger; but the members of Congress will be more exposed than I shall be, and I hold myself intrusted with the care of their health, a precious deposit, which I will preserve according to the best of my judgment, with perfect integrity, and with more caution than I would my own.

It is scarcely worth a question, whether they shall be convened at Trenton, Lancaster, or any other place. I know, from painful experience, they cannot be accommodated at any of those places. The place must be Philadelphia or New York.

Si quid novisti rectius, imperti.

I am, dear Sir, as ever, with great regard,

John Adams.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

East Chester, 26 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have to thank you for your summary, in your letter of the 23d, of the despatches from Mr. Pinckney, Mr. Murray, Mr. Bulkely, &c.

Mr. Murray arrived in season to renew his old friendship with his predecessor. They had spent some weeks together at the Hague, more than a dozen years ago. Mr. Adams had an opportunity to introduce Mr. Murray to his friends, and to communicate to him the train of affairs; an advantage which Mr. Murray earnestly wished before he sailed from Philadelphia.

Mr. Pinckney has been well acquainted with Mr. Gerry. They have always been upon terms of friendship, and I doubt not he will be as well pleased as if Mr. Dana had accepted.

Poor Portugal has been intimidated into concessions, as humiliating to herself as pernicious to the world. I am not surprised that M. Marbois should wish that Colonel Pickering had not pushed the point of gratitude so far.[1] He may well be

[1] This alludes to a passage in Mr. Pickering's letter touching the translation

surprised, and ought to be grateful that his own letter to Vergennes was not quoted at full length. Nothing could have better illustrated the question of gratitude.

My youngest son, Thomas Boylston Adams, has been in Paris, and instead of being ordered out of France, as our Jacobinic papers boasted, he accepted, the day before he returned, a polite invitation to dine with one of the Directors, Citizen Carnot, by whom he was civilly treated, and urged to endeavor to reconcile the two countries. He was admitted, and had a convenient seat assigned him, at the ceremony of drawing the lot, for the director who was to rote out. In short, he was treated with great distinction. I am disappointed in my hopes of seeing him this season. His brother, who is a little disconcerted at his removal to Berlin (which he says is in the heart of Germany, where he shall not see an American in a year), has taken advantage of it to insist upon his company so earnestly, that I think he will prevail, and I must remain, another year at least, forlorn.

We must prepare as exact a statement as our intelligence will justify, of the position of our agents, civil and military, on the Mississippi, and of the disposition of the Spaniards and inhabitants towards them, to be inserted in the speech.

And pray, give me your opinion, explicitly, whether, from the prevalence of contagious sickness in Philadelphia, or the existence of any other circumstances, it would be hazardous to the lives or health of the members of Congress, to meet in that city on the second Monday in November.

If I should not issue a proclamation convening Congress at New York, I shall take you by the hand in Trenton, the first week in November, in my way to Philadelphia.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard, yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. I return you guardian Noel's speech to his helpless ward.[1]

and publication of his despatch to General Pinckney of the 16th of January preceding. He says:

"All the members of the legislature were furnished, and officers of government. M. Ségur and some others wish the case of gratitude had been touched more lightly. General Pinckney, however, thinks all that is said upon it was necessary. "The friends of Vergennes (says Mountflorence) do not like the facts laid to his charge. M. Marbois would have wished Colonel P. had not so deeply pressed that matter."

[1] This was an address from Noel, the minister of the French Directory, in

TO O. WOLCOTT, JR., SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

East Chester, 27 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I have received your favor of the 24th,[1] and thank you for your careful attention to the distemper in Philadelphia. Representations similar to yours are sent me from various quarters. That there would be considerable public inconvenience in a convention of Congress at any place out of Philadelphia, is certain, and this consideration has great weight. That there would be much popular clamor, at least much low snarling, among the inhabitants of the foul dens in Philadelphia, is very probable. This, however, would have little weight with me, against a measure of general necessity or expediency. Mr. McHenry and Mr. Pickering are of your opinion; and this union will have more weight than all the brawlers of Philadelphia, even though they should be countenanced by the prudent citizens.

Your conjectures concerning the success of our envoys to France appear to me very probable; yet I cannot apprehend so much from the personal feelings of Talleyrand. He received a great deal of cordial hospitality in this country, and had not the smallest reason to complain, that ever came to my knowledge, in any place. As a reasonable man, he could not but approve of the President's caution, knowing himself to be upon the list of emigrants, and knowing the clamor which would be raised by the French minister at the presentation of an illustrious Frenchman by any other than himself. It is a part of the duty of an ambassador, to judge of the persons among his countrymen whom it would be proper to present to government. It would have been a slight, at least, to the French minister, to have received a man he had refused to present. It would have been offensive to the government of France, to have received a man proscribed by their laws. There is, however, little immediate advantage to be expected from this embassy, I fear. It will be spun out into an immeasurable length, unless quickened by an embargo. We must unshackle our merchant ships. If Con-

Holland, to the Batavian Convention, designed to influence the adoption of the Constitution by the people.

[1] Printed in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. i. 571.

gress will not do it, I shall have scruples about continuing the restriction upon the collectors.

What the session of Congress will produce, I know not; but a torpor, a despondency, has seized all men in America as well as Europe. The system of terror, according to an Indian expression, has "put petticoats on them." The treachery of the common people against their own countries, the transports with which they seize the opportunity of indulging their envy and gratifying their revenge against all whom they have been in the habit of looking up to, at every hazard to their countries, and, in the end, at every expense of misery to themselves, has given a paralytic stroke to the wisdom and courage of nations.

If peace is refused to England, they will leap the gulf. Their stocks are not much higher than those of the French. The latter, I see in some speech in the Council of Five Hundred, have been at forty. Can these be the general mass of the French national debt, old as well as new?

The French directory, I take it for granted, must have war. War, open or understood, is their eternal doom.

I am, dear Sir, with unalterable esteem,

John Adams.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

East Chester, 31 October, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I received your favor of the 28th. Inclosed are some papers I received from the city of Washington. They are duplicates of such as I received several weeks ago. I have delayed an answer, because I was not satisfied, and wished to take advice. After you have examined them, I wish for your opinion, first, whether I ought to sign the warrant of attorney without limitation of time; second, whether the power ought not to be to Scott, Thornton, and White, and their successors in the office of commissioners. The papers you will please to return to me with your advice.

I thank you for another abridgment of the public despatches. Are you not misinformed concerning La Forest? I have understood that he is in Philadelphia, and that he arrived there

this last summer in the questionable shape of an unaccredited chargé des affaires.

Talleyrand, I should suppose, could not be for war with this country; nor can I apprehend that even the Triumvirate, as they begin to be called in France, will be for a measure so decided. A continued appearance of umbrage, and continued depredations on a weak, defenceless commerce, will be much more convenient for their views. By all the public papers I receive from abroad, it appears that the state of things at present in France is exactly as I have many times written to particular friends in Europe. The executive directory is divided into a party of three, and a party of two. The two are the most popular, coincide best with the public opinion, and agree with a majority in both houses of the legislature. This drives the three to the necessity of courting the army and the populace. And the question between the three and the two can be decided only by a civil war. The worst evil that can happen in any government is a divided executive; and, as a plural executive must, from the nature of men, be forever divided, this is a demonstration that a plural executive is a great evil, and incompatible with liberty. That emulation in the human heart, which produces rivalries of men, cities, and nations, which produces almost all the good in human life, produces, also, almost all the evil. This is my philosophy of government. The great art lies in managing this emulation. It is the only defence against its own excesses. The emulation of the legislative and executive powers should be made to control each other. The emulation between the rich and the poor among the people, should be made to check itself by balancing the two houses in the legislature, which represent these two classes of society, so invidious at all times against each other.

But, instead of three lines, which I intended to write to you, I have slided into a pedantical lecture upon government, for which I beg your pardon.

With great esteem and regard, yours, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, 24 January, 1798.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, and the Attorney-General, to take into their consideration the state of the nation, and its foreign relations, especially with France. These, indeed, may be so connected with those with England, Spain, Holland, and others, that perhaps the former cannot be well weighed without the other. If our envoys extraordinary should be refused an audience, or, after an audience, be ordered to depart without accomplishing the objects of their mission,

1. They may repair to Holland; or, 2. Two of them may return home, leaving one abroad; or, 3. All of them may return to America.

In the first case, will it be prudent to call them all home? and, in the second, to recall the one?

In any of these three cases, what will be necessary or expedient for the executive authority of government to do here?

In what manner should the first intelligence be announced to Congress; by message, or speech?

What measures should be recommended to Congress? Shall an immediate declaration of war be recommended or suggested? If not, what other system shall be recommended more than a repetition of the recommendations heretofore repeatedly made to both houses? Will it in any case, and in what cases, be advisable to recommend an embargo?

What measures will be proper to take with Spain? What with Holland? What with Portugal? But, above all, what will policy dictate to be said to England, and how shall it be said? by Mr. King, or to Mr. Liston? and how shall it be conveyed to Mr. King? by packet, or any ordinary conveyance; or by some special, trusty, and confidential messenger? Will it not be the soundest policy, even in case of a declaration of war on both sides, between France and the United States, for us to be totally silent to England, and wait for her overtures? Will it not be imprudent in us to connect ourselves with Britain, in any manner that may impede us in embracing the first favorable moment or opportunity to make a separate peace? What

aids or benefits can we expect from England by any stipulations with her, which her interest will not impel her to extend to us without any? On the brink of the dangerous precipice on which she stands, will not shaking hands with her necessitate us to fall with her, if she falls? On the other hand, what aid could we stipulate to afford her, which our own interest would not oblige us to give without any other obligation? In case of a revolution in England, a wild democracy will probably prevail for as long a time as it did in France; in such case, will not the danger of reviving and extending that delirium in America, be increased in proportion to the intimacy of our connection with that nation?[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] No answers have been found to these questions, on the part of the Secretary of State or of the Treasury.

The Secretary of War, in his reply, dated the 15th of February, thought that there was a general aversion to war in the minds of the people of the United States, and a particular dislike on the part of a portion of them, to a war with France. Hence an express declaration was unadvisable, as subjecting the country to all the chances of evil from the vengeance of an excited and victorious nation. A mitigated hostility would, therefore, be most advisable, which might leave a door open for negotiation. This might consist of a truly *vigorous*, *defensive plan*, with a countenance still kept up to negotiate. Should, therefore, one or more of the commissioners remain in Europe, it might be well to leave them there, not to lose the appearance of a disposition to negotiate. If, however, they should all return, it would be too humiliating to send them back.

In this view the measures proposed to Congress should be:

1. To give permission to merchant vessels, under proper guards, to arm for defence.

2. To authorize the President to prepare, as fast as possible, twenty sloops of war, from sixteen to twenty guns each.

3. To authorize him to complete the three remaining frigates.

4. To authorize him, in case of open rupture, to provide a number of ships of the line, not exceeding ten.

5. To declare the treaties of alliance and commerce suspended.

6. To provide for an immediate army of sixteen thousand men, and an auxiliary one of twenty thousand.

7. To bring into action all the sources of revenue, and to authorize an immediate loan.

The President's message, predicated on these measures, should recite all the inducements in a grave and dignified tone.

An embargo did not seem to be eligible.

With regard to other nations it was not expedient to enter into any formal engagements with any of them. Yet it might be well to sound Great Britain about a loan, about convoys, and a coöperation in case of open rupture, pointing to the Floridas, Louisiana, and the South American possessions of Spain. All on this side of the Mississippi, with New Orleans, to be ours in case of conquest. It might be well, too, to make a provisional negotiation for ten ships of the line, to have effect in case the President should receive the authority to provide so many. A confidential messenger to be employed to communicate these instructions to the minister, Mr. King.

The appointment of a day of national fast, proper and expedient.

TO JAMES WILKINSON.

Philadelphia, 4 February, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I have received your favor of the 24th December, by the Miami chief, the Little Turtle, and have received and observed him with attention. He is certainly a remarkable man. He is recovered of the smallpox, and, what is worse, a severe fit of the gout. We shall endeavor to make him happy here, and contented after his return. I thank you for introducing him to me, and for the information you have given me concerning him.

I have also received your letter of the 26th December. It is very true that I have been tortured for a greater part of the year past with written anonymous insinuations against several persons in conspicuous public stations, that they had formed improper connections with Spain, and, among others, against yourself. It has been frequently asserted that you held a commission and received pay as a Colonel in the Spanish service. This opinion seems to have taken such root upon the Mississippi, among the people in general, that scarcely any man arrives from that neighborhood who does not bring the report along with him. They seem to be in such a temper in that region, that nobody escapes accusation. I have not suffered

The Attorney-General, assuming that the envoys had been refused an audience, thought all communications to Congress should be by message.

The envoys ought to be recalled by an order of the President.

The President should recommend a declaration of war.

An embargo should not be laid, except by way of reprisal on French vessels in our ports only.

An intimate connection with Great Britain to be avoided. Yet, through a confidential messenger, instructions might be given to Mr. King, to make stipulations to open our ports to British privateers and to prohibit all trade with France. Our own merchant ships might arm.

An additional force to the army to seize upon New Orleans, in case Spain should follow France.

The *exequaturs* to the French consuls to be revoked.

This opinion bears date the 8th of March.

The President's own opinion of the policy to be pursued towards Great Britain, is sufficiently indicated by the form of the questions. Mr. Pickering invited Mr. Hamilton to encourage an alliance, offensive and defensive, but Mr. Hamilton was too wary to commit himself precipitately, though clearly favoring the idea as an ultimate measure. He especially urged the procuring "a dozen British frigates to be sent to our coast, to pursue the directions of this government." See the letter of Mr. Pickering and the answer. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 272, p. 278.

these rumors concerning you to make impression upon me; but have lamented what I perceived must be the consequence of them among the people of the United States. The same jealousy or malice, which transmitted them to me, I suppose would propagate them elsewhere without much reserve.

I recollect perfectly well my injunction to you, in person, to employ all the force within your power, both militia and regulars, if necessary, to oppose the English, or any other foreign nation, who should presume to attempt a violation of our territory by any expedition through it against their enemies.

It would be a pleasure to me to nominate your son to a commission, as you request; but, in the first place, there is no vacancy in the artillery at present, as I am told; and, secondly, it was a rule established by my predecessor, that the ensigns should have attained the age of twenty-one, and I should be severely censured for departing from a military precaution of so high authority.

I recollect my consenting that you should make an excursion, if in your judgment the service would admit of it, to the copper country. I thank you for the sample you have sent me, which I design to have analyzed.

For yourself, Sir, I will say, I esteem your talents, I respect your services, and feel an attachment to your person, as I do to every man whose name and character I have so long known in the service of our country, whose behavior has been consistent.

We may be nearer than we suspect to another trial of our spirits. I doubt not yours will be found faithful. What measures you may think fit to take, to silence the villainous clamors and rumors of your connections with Spain and France, I know not; but no violent ones or military ones will do any good. I shall give no countenance to any imputations, unless accusations should come, and then you will have room to justify yourself. But, I assure you, I do not expect that any charge will be seriously made. I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO J. M. FORBES.

Philadelphia, 6 February, 1798.

Sir, — I received, in season, and with pleasure, your letter of 12th January.

I must avow that, upon the first publication of Mr. Monroe's work, I was much hurt at that levity with which so many Americans, and among them some of respectable character, had taken an open part against the executive authority of their own government, especially when that authority was exercised by a character so universally respected as Washington. It looked as if Americans would be forever incapable of any kind of government.

Your particular obligations to Mr. Monroe for his services to your brother, must have made a deep impression on your feelings, and the sense you express of them does honor to your heart, and will apologize for a conduct which, however, it will not justify. As this is the first instance, it may be pardoned; but, most assuredly, a second never will.[1]

I am obliged to you for writing to me on this occasion, and for the just sentiments and handsome expressions of them to, Sir, &c.

John Adams.

JOHN SEVIER TO JOHN ADAMS.

Knoxville, Tennessee, 6 February, 1798.

Sir, — In a letter of this day from the Hon. David Campbell, Esq., one of the judges of the superior courts of law and equity in this State, he complains that on the 3d instant, about ten o'clock at night, on his own premises, and not within the Indian line, he was arrested by two of Colonel Butler's officers, and conducted a prisoner to his cantonment, and there detained until the next day, before he was liberated.

Permit me, Sir, with all due deference to observe that no act

[1] Mr. Forbes, out of a sense of personal obligations for the rescue of his brother from prison and perhaps from death, signed the address of the Americans at Paris to Mr. Monroe, upon his recall, which paper, in his "*View of the conduct of the Executive*," that gentleman made great use of to sustain himself.

hostile to the general government has been committed or attempted by the State of Tennessee, nor can any transaction of our government warrant the imputation of any thing of the kind. Our laws are sufficiently wholesome and energetic, and also faithfully administered in a manner fully competent and adequate to the suppression of every kind of crimes and enormities that may be committed.

I do not harbor or entertain a doubt that the President ever gave any orders that will warrant or justify a procedure so despotic and inimical to the liberties of our citizens; but, on the contrary, believe he is entirely uninformed that a transaction of the kind was contemplated.

Permit me to express that it is painful in the extreme that such an event has happened, and been exercised on a character that has served with fidelity the United, as well as several of the States, in very high and dignified stations. I therefore request with much solicitude that a stop may be put to such unwarrantable and unconstitutional conduct; if not, the disorder may progress into an incurable disease.

I cannot admit or suppose that martial law has any right to be enforced, when the civil meets no obstruction or impediment; but if such has been directed, we hope to be advised in order that we may know in what manner to conduct in future.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

John Sevier.

TO WILLIAM S. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 16 February, 1798.

Sir, — I have received the letter you wrote me on the 7th of this month, and I shall give all the attention to the subject of it which may be necessary. It is not new to me.

You are too precipitate, in my opinion, in pronouncing an opinion, that the General[1] has been guilty of high crimes, &c.

There have not been wanting critics upon your conduct as severe as you have been upon his. It is reported, not much to the advantage of your reputation or mine, that you have been

[1] Wilkinson.

to Detroit, for Brockholst Livingston and company, to speculate in lands and claims of those who mean to remain British subjects and to remove to Canada; and that, to cloak your real purposes, you gave out that you had been sent by me for ends of government of some sort or other. I can scarcely believe that you could countenance a report so totally unfounded.[1]

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO WILLIAM S. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 2 March, 1798.

SIR, — I have received your letter of the 23d of February, the contents of which are satisfactory to me.

In my letter to you I did not say that I believed the report I had heard. In truth, I did not give credit to it; but hearing the rumor, and knowing others who had heard it, I was determined to give you an opportunity of contradicting it, if you could contradict it, and of enabling me to do the same. You have now put it in my power, and I shall avail myself of it as opportunity presents.[2]

General Wilkinson has been informed of the complaints, without any information from whence they came, and instructed to modify, if possible, his proclamation, so as to remove such of them as are well founded.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] Colonel Smith had served in the army during the war. He received, from the Congress of the Confederation, the appointment of secretary of legation to the mission to Great Britain. He there married the only daughter of Mr. Adams. His tastes were all for military life; but, after the failure of the expedition under General Miranda, in which he was engaged, he retired to the interior of New York, from whence he was sent as a representative to Congress in 1813. He died in 1816.

[2] This letter is material in connection with the letter to the same person of the 19th December of this year. See p. 618 and the note.

TO JOHN SEVIER, GOVERNOR OF TENNESSEE.

Philadelphia, 6 March, 1798.

Sir, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 6th of February last.

It is very certain I have never given any orders that will warrant or justify any procedure despotic or inimical to the liberties of our citizens; but, on the contrary, was entirely uninformed, until I received your letter, that any transaction of the kind you describe had been practised or contemplated.

I inclose a copy of a letter since written by my direction to Lieutenant-Colonel Butler. I cannot, however, close this letter without inquiring whether the Honorable David Campbell, Esq., one of the judges of the superior courts of law and equity, in your State, is the person who wrote and signed the name of Campbell to a late publication in a Knoxville Gazette.

I have the honor to be, &c.

John Adams.

TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, 13 March, 1798.

Will it be advisable to present immediately to Congress the whole of the communications from our minister in France, with the exception of the names of the persons employed by the minister Talleyrand to exhibit and enforce his requisitions for a bribe, under an injunction of secrecy as to that particular?

Ought the President, then, to recommend, in his message, an immediate declaration of war? [1]

John Adams.

[1] No answer to these questions, by the secretaries of State or of the Treasury, is found. Mr. Wolcott furnished a draft of a message which may have been his answer, and which was adopted and sent to Congress on the 19th. Mr. McHenry specifies two things as demanded by the French Directory.

1. A bribe of fifty thousand pounds sterling for the ministers and four of their corps.

2. A loan for national purposes, as a condition precedent to the suspension of the order to capture our vessels.

These demands being wholly inadmissible, and no better being likely to be

F. DE MIRANDA TO JOHN ADAMS.

A Londres, ce 24 Mars, 1798.

Monsieur le Président, — C'est au nom des colonies Hispano-Américaines, que j'ai l'honneur d'envoyer à votre Excellence les propositions ci-jointes. Elles ont été présentées également aux ministres de sa Majesté Britannique, qui les ont reçu très favorablement, en témoignant beaucoup de satisfaction d'avoir à agir dans un cas pareil avec les États Unis de l'Amérique. Et il me semble que le délai que j'éprouve (affligeant réellement, dans un moment aussi pressant) résulte précisément de l'attente où le gouvernement Anglais paroit être, de voir l'Amérique du Nord décidée à rompre définitivement avec la

offered a full disclosure to Congress, of all the facts, seems to be advisable and proper.

The objections to this course are:

1. Danger to the personal safety of the ministers.
2. It may make an insurmountable bar to any future negotiation.
3. It may be premature, as circumstances might yet change the designs of the Directory.

The first objection is thought to have but a slight foundation, as the French seem to have expected publicity. The second is better founded. But the President, in communicating to Congress, under an injunction of secrecy, the requisition of the French, devolves the responsibility of divulging it on Congress. As to the third, there seems to be no just ground to suppose any favorable change in the Directory as likely.

As to the second question, Mr. McHenry would avoid an open declaration of war; but instead of it, proposed a *defensive plan*, like that sketched out in his answer to the queries of the 24th January.

The Attorney-General thought it would be dangerous to the safety of the envoys in France, if the disclosure of the facts were made known before their departure should be ascertained. He was, therefore, not in favor of making the communications at this time.

To the second question he gave an affirmative answer, provided the declaration were not made until the envoys were known to have left France.

Mr. Pickering, "without the privity of any one," as he says, communicated by two separate letters of the 25th to Mr. Hamilton all the secret information of the government. In one he answers a short letter of the 23d urging the communication of the papers to Congress, and he darkly suggests the policy of a treaty, offensive and defensive, with Great Britain, and proposes that provisional orders to that end should be sent to Mr. King. In the other, he incidentally mentions the fact that the President decided to keep back the despatches on the ground suggested by the Attorney-General. Hamilton's *Works*, vol. vi. pp. 272–278.

Notwithstanding the President's decision, a call was made by Congress for the despatches, on the 2d of April, and they were sent in the next day. "In this case," writes the keen-eyed Jefferson, "there appeared a separate squad, to wit, the Pinckney interest, which is a distinct thing, and will be seen sometime to lurch the President. It is in truth the Hamilton party, whereof Pinckney is only made the stalking-horse." See his letter to James Madison. Randolph's *Jefferson*, vol. iii. p. 383.

France; par le désir qu'elle a de faire cause commune, et de coöpérer ensemble à l'indépendance absolue du continent entier du Nouveau-Monde.

Comme l'esprit de justice, générosité, et attachement de mes compatriotes vers les États Unis, se trouve mieux exprimé dans le document qui me sert de pouvoir, autant que d'instruction, j'ai voulu y joindre une copie complète. Persuadé que cette démarche amicale et franche servira plus efficacement à accélérer la décision . . . . comptant toujours sur la réserve indispensable, dans tout ce qui ne regarde pas directement les États Unis. Si quelque article de ceux qui sont contenus dans cette instruction (ou toute autre chose qui soit relative) eut besoin d'explication, D. Pedro Josef Caro, un de mes compatriotes, commissaire aussi des colonies Hispano-Americaines, et chargé de vous remettre celle-ci, pourra satisfaire amplement et compétemment à tout.[1]

Sa mission, après avoir reçu les ordres de V. E., est de se rendre sans délai au continent Hispano-Américain, afin d'instruire nos commettans et compatriotes de l'état actuel des négotiations à nous confiées, ainsi que de la situation politique de l'Europe. Je vous prie de vouloir bien lui faciliter tout-ce dont il auroit besoin pour cet important objet, et pour se rendre incessament à la province de Santa Fé de Bogotà.

Je ne vous dissimule pas, Monsieur le Président, mes inquiétudes sur l'entrée prochaine des troupes Françaises en Espagne. Crainte qu'un mouvement convulsif dans la métropole ne produise pas des secousses anarchiques dans les colonies; et que l'abominable système de la France ne s'introduise chez nous, faute d'avoir pris des mesures promptes et efficaces pour l'empêcher. *Dii avertant.* Enfin j'espère que le petit secours dont nous avons besoin pour commencer, et qui se réduit à *six ou huit* vaisseaux de ligne, et *quatre ou cinq* mille hommes des troupes, nous le trouverons facilement tant en Angleterre que dans l'Amérique . . . mes souhaits seroient que la marine fut Anglaise, et les troupes de terre Américaines. Veuille la providence que les États-Unis fassent pour ses compatriotes du sud en 1798, ce que le roi de France fit pour eux en 1778!

[1] M. Caro did not come. Being in great haste to return home, he sent a letter, a translation of which is appended to Mr. Pickering's letter, 21 August, 1798. He also addressed a letter to the same effect to Mr. Adams, which, as repetition, is omitted.

Je me félicite toujours de voir à la tête du pouvoir exécutif Américain cet homme distingué, qui par son courage rendit son pays indépendant, et qui par sa sagesse lui donna après un gouvernement bien balancé, en sauvant ainsi la liberté. Nous profiterons sans doute de vos savantes leçons, et je me réjouis de vous apprendre d'avance que la forme de gouvernement projeté est mixte, avec un chef héréditaire du pouvoir exécutif sous le nom *d'Inca*, et, ce que j'aime davantage, pris dans la même famille; un *Sénat* composé de familles nobles, mais non héréditaire; et une *Chambre* des communes élue parmi tous les autres citoyens qui auront une propriété compétente. Telle est l'esquisse de la forme de gouvernement qui parait réunir la majorité des suffrages dans le continent Hispano-Américain, et qui empêchera sans doute les conséquences fatales du système Franco-républicain, que Montesquieu appelle *la liberté extrême*.

En vous adressant directement ces propositions,[1] j'ai cru met-

[1] Inclosed with this adroit letter came the copy of a paper formally executed by three persons, styled commissaries of an assembly of deputies of towns and provinces of South America, held at Madrid, in Spain, on the 8th of October, 1797. The purport of it was to mature a plan to effect the independence of the Spanish American Colonies, under the joint protection, and with the joint aid, of Great Britain and the United States.

Mr. Pitt had favored this project during the controversy with Spain, in 1790, about Nootka Sound, but he checked it when that country yielded the point of honor. He again favored it at this time, as the extracts from Mr. King's letters, appended to that of Mr. Pickering of 21st August, 1798, sufficiently prove. The design was stupendous, and, if attempted, could not have failed to entangle the United States in a European war. It provided that Great Britain should, on her part, furnish the naval force, not exceeding twenty ships of the line, and the money, whilst the United States should supply a land force of five thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, during the whole war that might ensue. In case of success, Great Britain was to have for her share the West India Islands, the exclusive supply of her own manufactures to South America, and the exclusive right of transit over the isthmus. The United States, on their part, were to be guaranteed the possession of Florida and all the territory east of the Mississippi. General Hamilton expected and desired to command the land force, a fact which supplies a motive for the enlargement of the army and the desire of the command at this time, quite independent of any apprehension of a French invasion. General Knox was likewise engaged in it, and Mr. Pickering was undoubtedly, and Mr. McHenry probably, privy to the whole movement. It fell through, because Mr. Adams declined to give any reply to this appeal of General Miranda, and the turn of affairs in the peninsula soon after qualified the earnestness of the British in his behalf. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 343, 347, 348, 368. See, also, an interesting article evidently drawn up from original sources of information, in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xiii. pp. 277 – 311. An important letter of Miranda to Mr. Hamilton is there printed, which is not in Hamilton's Works.

The relations which France and Spain had contracted with each other by the treaty of St. Ildefonso, of the 19th of August, 1796, embraced a guaranty of the dominions of each other both in the old and the new world. Of course, any hostile demonstration against the Spanish colonies, must have led to a general war.

tre toute la reserve requise dans une affaire aussi extraordinaire qu' importante. J'ai l'honneur en outre d'y joindre un état de la population, produits, exportation et consommation de l'Amérique Espagnole, qui étant fait sur des notices les plus exactes, ainsi que les plus récentes, m'a paru mériter votre attention.

Avec les sentimens de la plus haute consideration et de l'estime la plus parfaite, j'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

Francisco de Miranda.

TO THOMAS JOHNSON.

Philadelphia, 26 April, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I have received your letter of — I cannot recollect what date, because I referred it immediately to the secretary of the treasury, who has under consideration all proposals of that kind. Yours will be carefully and impartially attended to with all others.

I perceive, by the steadiness and firmness of your handwriting, that you are still a young man. Having occasion at present for a little more youth than I possess, I wish you would advise me how to acquire it, or come yourself over to Macedonia and help us with yours.

I am a solitary individual of 1774 men. All the rest have departed. I am, however, very steadfastly your friend,

John Adams.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 22 June, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I have this morning received with great pleasure the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 17th of this month.[1]

Although a visit to the city of Washington would give me great pleasure, and chiefly for the opportunity it would afford me of paying my respects at Mount Vernon, yet I cannot but

[1] Sparks's *Washington's Writings*, vol. xi. p. 241.

consider the execution of the plan as very uncertain. I thank you, Sir, for your obliging invitation, and shall certainly wish to spend as much time as possible under the refreshing shade of your vine.

The approbatory addresses are very precious to me, as they discover more union among the States, and greater unanimity among the people, than was expected. My administration will not certainly be easy to myself; it will be happy, however, if it is honorable. The prosperity of it to the country will depend upon Heaven, and very little on any thing in my power. I have no qualifications for the martial part of it, which is like to be the most essential. If the Constitution and your convenience would admit of my changing places with you, or of my taking my old station, as your Lieutenant Civil, I should have no doubts of the ultimate prosperity and glory of the country.

In forming an army, whenever I must come to that extremity, I am at an immense loss whether to call out all the old generals, or to appoint a young set. If the French come here, we must learn to march with a quick step, and to attack, for, in that way only, they are said to be vulnerable. I must tax you sometimes for advice. We must have your name, if you will, in any case, permit us to use it. There will be more efficacy in it than in many an army. Mrs. Adams and Miss Smith join with me in presenting our best respects to yourself, Mrs. Washington, and Miss Custis.

With the highest esteem, &c.,

John Adams.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 6 July, 1798.

Dear Sir, — It is my desire that you embrace the first opportunity to set out on your journey to Mount Vernon, and wait on General Washington with the commission of Lieutenant-General and Commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, which, by the advice and consent of the Senate, has been signed by me.

The reasons and motives which prevailed with me, to venture

on such a step as the nomination of this great and illustrious character, whose voluntary resignation alone occasioned my introduction to the office I now hold, were too numerous to be detailed in this letter, and are too obvious and important to escape the observation of any part of America or Europe; but, as it is a movement of great delicacy, it will require all your address to communicate the subject in a manner that shall be inoffensive to his feelings, and consistent with all the respect that is due from me to him.

If the General should decline the appointment, all the world will be silent, and respectfully acquiesce. If he should accept, all the world, except the enemies of this country, will rejoice. If he should come to no decisive determination, but take the subject into consideration, I shall not appoint any other Lieutenant-General until his conclusion is known.

His advice in the formation of a list of officers would be extremely desirable to me. The names of Lincoln, Morgan, Knox, Hamilton, Gates, Pinckney, Lee, Carrington, Hand, Muhlenberg, Dayton, Burr, Brooks, Cobb, Smith, may be mentioned to him, and any others that occur to you; particularly, I wish to have his opinion of the man most suitable for Inspector-General, and Adjutant-General, and Quartermaster-General. His opinion on all subjects must have great weight, and I wish you to obtain from him as much of his reflections upon the times and service as you can. Wishing you a pleasant journey, and a speedy return in improved health, I am, with great esteem,[1] &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] On the 12th of July Mr. McHenry wrote to Mr. Adams from Mount Vernon, expressing his belief that General Washington would accept the appointment, with the condition that he was not to be called into active service until his presence should be absolutely needed. He further says:

"He has shown me the copy of a letter he had written to me, and which must have got to Philadelphia the day I left it, in which he treats on several points that will require your attention. I have, therefore, desired it to be delivered to you, and shall obtain from him the names of the persons he considers the best qualified for his confidential officers, *and without whom, I think, he would not serve.*"

The manuscript shows the last sentence to have been added after the letter was completed. General Washington, in his letter of the 16th of September, says, that this was inserted *at his desire.* Mr. Hamilton's letter, hereafter to be noticed, of which Mr. McHenry was the bearer, had then been just received.

There is no evidence that General Washington ever voluntarily assumed the

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 7 July, 1798.

Dear Sir, — Mr. McHenry, the Secretary at War, will have the honor to wait on you in my behalf, to impart to you a step I have ventured to take, and which I should have been happy to have communicated in person, if such a journey had been, at this time, in my power.[1]

As I said, in a former letter, if it had been in my power to nominate you to be President of the United States, I should have done it with less hesitation and more pleasure. My reasons for this measure will be too well known to need any explanation to the public; every friend and every enemy of America will comprehend them at first blush. To you, Sir, I owe all the apologies I can make. The urgent necessity I am in of your advice and assistance — indeed, of your conduct and direction of the war, is all I can urge, and that is a sufficient satisfaction to myself and the world. I hope it will be so considered by yourself.

Mr. McHenry will have the honor to consult you upon the organization of the army, and upon every thing relating to it.

With the highest respect, &c.

John Adams.

delicate office of dictating to the executive of the Union. He naturally desired the selection of such persons for his staff as were agreeable to him and as he could trust, and this he must have had at any rate. All that seems beyond this in his action, was the work of others. See the note to page 588 of this volume.

[1] Mr. Adams has been censured for the sudden manner of making this nomination. He had written to General Washington on the 22d of June, intimating his intention, and no answer had been received. Congress was on the point of adjournment, and the whole army remained to be organized. General Washington himself expected it. See his letter to Mr. McHenry, 5th July, Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. p. 255. Such was the state of the popular feeling that, had it been longer postponed, another species of censure would have arisen from many of the very persons who, as it was, blamed his precipitation. The difficulty seems to have been that he did not wait for the *conditions*, as it respected other nominations, which were maturing for him, through the agency of General Washington. Mr. Hamilton had been leading to this as early as the 2d of June, when he specified his own appointment. See his letter to General Washington of that date. *Hamilton's Works*, vol vi. p. 294.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 7 July, 1798.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of State to give directions for preparing letters to the Consul-General and all the other consuls and vice-consuls of the French republic throughout the United States, revoking their *exequaturs*, and a proclamation announcing such revocation to the public; the proclamation to be published, and the letters expedited, as soon as the law shall be passed declaring the treaties and convention no longer obligatory.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon.

Subjects respectfully submitted to the consideration of the General of the armies of the United States, by the Secretary of War.[2]

1. Will it be proper that the President should forthwith proceed to appoint the officers to the army proposed to be immediately raised, by the bill pending before Congress, "to augment the army of the United States, and for other purposes?" Or,

Will it be expedient to defer, until the principal part of the troops are enlisted, the appointment of all the general officers of the said army, excepting the Inspector-General and such staff officers as may be necessary to the formation and discipline of regiments? Or,

Will it be better that the whole of the officers be immediately appointed, in order that as little time as possible may be lost in forming and disciplining both officers and men for actual service, noticing only to those officers, who may not be immediately wanted, that their pay, &c., will not commence till called upon to do duty with the army?

[1] The law was passed on this day, 7th of July, 1798.
[2] These queries and answers do not seem to have been published before.

2. Will it be expedient that the President should appoint, as soon as proper characters can be selected, the officers to the ten thousand troops of the provisional army, and that they should be furnished with such instructions and orders as will enable them to proceed to enlist the men, whenever the President shall declare, by proclamation or otherwise, that the measure has become necessary?

3. May advantages be expected to result from the appointment of field officers in the respective States to take the command of such volunteer companies therein, as may offer their services to the President and be accepted, as to render such appointments advisable?

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ANSWER.

14 July, 1798.

1st. If the bill, pending in Congress for augmenting the present force of the United States, should pass into a law, it becomes the duty of the President to carry that law into execution promptly. Of course, all such officers as are necessary for the purpose of recruiting, inspecting the recruits, superintending their discipline, &c., at the several places of rendezvous, must be appointed without delay. The necessity of appointing the *higher* grades is not so urgent; but, in my opinion, the sooner these are also fixed on and their acceptances known, the better. Not, however, to be called out, nor to receive the pay and emoluments of office, until their services are required, which circumstances must decide.

2d. It would be inexpedient, I conceive, to *appoint*, but very proper to *fix* upon the general and field officers (colonels commandants, at least) for the provisional army, without much delay; and know whether they would accept the appointments that are announced to them. To proceed further might excite alarm, and give rise to remarks which would be more than a counterpoise to the facility intended to be answered by it.

3d. If two things could be combined, and the evidence thereof pretty well ascertained, the measure would certainly be advantageous. These are, that the field officers should be composed of *proper* and *fit* men, and acceptable to the companies; but, if

both cannot be attained, the first is most important, and ought to be preferred.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

HENRY KNOX TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.[1]

Boston, 5 August, 1798.

SIR, — I have received your letter, dated on the 25th ultimo, informing me that the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, had been pleased to appoint me a Major-General in the army.

Impressed as I am with the conviction that our country is about to enter into a contest, in which its existence as an independent nation will be involved, I should promptly have accepted the appointment, however inconvenient to my private affairs, had not the following paragraph of your letter peculiarly arrested my notice.

"It may be proper to mention, that the nominations to the Senate, for general officers of the established and provisional army, were presented on the same day, and in the order in which they appear in the annexed list, and that, in registering them in this department, the same order will be observed."

The names placed before mine in the list are those of Generals Hamilton and Pinckney.

It is to be presumed that you are not uninformed of the military precedence I sustained in the late war, relatively to those gentlemen.

General Hamilton was a Captain, in the year 1776, in the corps of artillery which I commanded, and in the latter part of the same year I had the rank of Brigadier-General. In 1777, he was appointed an Aid-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief, with the incidental rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, which was his highest grade. I was established a Major-General from November, 1781.

The precise state of General Pinckney's rank is not at present recollected. He was a Colonel the greater part of the war, and

[1] This letter is inserted as essential to a complete view of the much disputed question of rank at this period.

obtained the rank of Brigadier-General either by actual appointment, or by virtue of the general resolve respecting brevet rank, in the year 1783.

It is, therefore, important, previously to my answering affirmatively or negatively, as to an acceptance, that you inform me on these points.

Whether the order of names, as specified in the list, is intended to establish the priority of rank? Or whether the former relative rank is intended to govern, according to the heretofore established principles and invariable practice? Those principles determine explicitly that all appointments, made *in the same grade and on the same day*, are to be governed by the former relative rank.

It is far from my intention to deny the perfect right of the Supreme Executive to direct the precedence of all officers in the same grade, in the manner he shall please. In such a case, however, it would be essential that the priority should be decidedly specified. For, if such specification should be wanting, no military tribunal would consider the order of names as a sufficient cause to destroy or reverse the former situations.

If the rules for deciding rank, founded upon the resolves or laws of Congress, under the confederation, and which have since continued to operate as a part of the military code, have been repealed or annulled, it would be acceptable to me to be informed by you when and by what authority the repeal was effected.

If these rules should be suspended or violated in the present instance, for a special purpose, the assertion is ventured that recourse must be had to them again, as the laws whereby to decide the ranks between officers of the same grade, who, under various circumstances of claim, may be brought into the army about to be raised.

Anxiously desirous of endeavoring to serve my country and its government in a cause altogether pure and just, I shall ever regret any circumstance which may oppose insurmountable obstacles to the measure, unless upon terms which would constantly excite sensations of public degradation.

I have the honor to be, &c.

H. Knox.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 14 August, 1798.

Sir, — I have received only this morning your letter of the 4th of this month. Its contents are of much importance.

I desire that you would inform General Washington, that I consider him in the public service from the date of his appointment, and entitled to all the emoluments of it. He is at liberty to receive all or any part, at his discretion; and is fully authorized to appoint his aids and secretaries, when he shall think fit. One secretary, at least, is indispensable immediately; and he ought to be allowed his pay and rations.[1]

Calling any other general officers into service at present, will be attended with difficulty, unless the rank were settled.[2] In my opinion, as the matter now stands, General Knox is legally entitled to rank next to General Washington; and no other arrangement will give satisfaction. If General Washington is of this opinion, and will consent to it, you may call him into actual service as soon as you please. The consequence of this will be that Pinckney must rank before Hamilton. If it shall be consented that the rank shall be Knox, Pinckney, and Hamilton, you may call the latter, too, into immediate service, when you please. Any other plan will occasion long delay and much confusion. You may depend upon it, the five New England States will not patiently submit to the humiliation that has been meditated for them.

If North declines the adjutancy, I am prepared to appoint another and a better.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.

John Adams.

[1] This was in answer to General Washington's letter of inquiry, addressed to the Secretary of War, on this point. Sparks's *Washington's Writings*, vol. xi. p. 277.

[2] Mr. McHenry, after recapitulating the difficulties of his situation, had said in his letter:

"I hope, Sir, after considering this summary view of a part of my business, that you will give me leave to call effectually to my aid the Inspector-General, and likewise General Knox, and to charge them with particular branches of the service."

Colonel Pickering and Mr. Wolcott had anticipated Mr. McHenry in the same application as early as the 8th instant.

F. DE MIRANDA TO JOHN ADAMS.

Londres, le 17 Aout, 1798.

Monsieur le Président, — Permettez moi de vous adresser, *par triplicata*, une copie de ma dépêche du 24 Mars, 1798, que M. Caro, mon compatriote, a eu l'honneur d'envoyer à votre Excellence, de Falmouth, le 10 Mai suivant. L'objet étant de la plus haute importance, et les accidens de la guerre ayant pu contrarier l'arrivée des deux premières, il m'a paru prudent de vous l'adresser de nouveau.

Depuis le départ de ma dépêche, les circonstances sont devenues plus favorables encore. Les événemens survenus et en Europe et aux États Unis rendent même la séparation des colonies Hispano-Américaines indispensable; d'autant plus qu'elles sont décidées à ne pas devenir les agens, encore moins les sujets, de la république Française. Des avis, qui me sont parvenus tout récemment, tant de la part de nos agens à Madrid que de celle des commissaires, mes compatriotes, qui sont partis pour l'Amérique du Sud, me confirment dans cette opinion; et je vois avec plaisir que l'Angleterre, sentant enfin que son salut et son bonheur futur dépendent absolument d'une alliance et d'un attachement intime avec l'Amérique, est résolue, en déposant tout esprit de jalousie et de monopole commercial, à coöpérer avec vous en faveur de cet important objet, dont le succès assurera non seulement le bonheur réciproque, mais encore la gloire immortelle, des trois parties interessées.

Mr. King, votre digne ambassadeur auprès de Sa Majesté Britannique, et qui jouit ici à tant de titres de l'estime générale, entrant dans tous les détails, vous communiquera les renseignemens qui vous seront nécessaires, tant à l'égard de l'Europe qu' à l'égard de l'Amérique du Sud. Nos intérêts étant les mêmes, et mes commettans ayant mis toute leur confiance dans leurs compatriotes du Nord, j'ai cru ne pouvoir mieux remplir leurs désirs qu'en agissant d'accord avec lui, sans la plus légère réserve, et avec une confiance mutuelle.

Puisque votre réponse doit en quelque sorte décider du sort de l'Amérique méridionale, et combler tous les souhaits de mes

compatriotes, je vous prie, Monsieur le Président, de vouloir bien me la faire parvenir le plutôt qu'il vous sera possible.[1]

Veuillez accepter les assurances, &c.,

F. DE MIRANDA.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 18 August, 1798.

SIR, — Since I have been here, his Excellency the governor of this State has inquired of me with some anxiety to know whether the cession of Castle Island is accepted. I referred that act of the legislature of this State to you or the Secretary of State, to prepare an answer of acceptance. Will you be so good as to attend to this subject as soon as possible, and forward the acceptance to me for my signature and conveyance to the governor, if that is sufficient? I do not remember that the acceptance of Congress is necessary.

Major Jackson, of the artillery, has applied to me; says he has not received his commission, and is out of employment. I have received very unpleasant information of the principles and conversation of one of the majors of the new corps of artillerists.[2] I wish you would inquire into the character of that Marylander. I wish to know, also, by what rule Jackson is placed as the third major. What pretensions have Brooks and the other to the precedence?

Lovell shall be appointed a captain of artillery in the place of Mitchell. His former rank, his age, his talents, his services

[1] Mr. Bristed says that this project failed, because Mr. Adams declined to give an immediate answer. See *Hints on the National Bankruptcy of Great Britain*, pp. 410–413. There can be no doubt that the bare suggestion of this alliance with Great Britain materially contributed to modify the policy towards France, although Mr. Adams was not then informed of the extent of the sympathy which General Miranda had succeeded in enlisting among some leading federalists. Miranda had been in the United States previous to the close of the revolution, had been inspired there with the desire of effecting the independence of South America, and had established many friendships in the army, which he continued to cherish with that view.

[2] Benjamin Brooks, of Maryland. The charge consisted in a statement made by Bishop Carroll, that he had expressed himself "in a manner highly disorganizing and inflammatory," in a local election preceding this time.

in the family of the Commander-in-chief, his education, his connections, entitle him.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO INCREASE SUMNER.

Quincy, 20 August, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the letter your Excellency did me the honor to write me, dated the 18th, by mistake I presume, as I am told it was written this morning. I have read all the papers, and return them. I think it will be advisable that your Excellency should communicate them to the Attorney-General of the State, and the District-Attorney, Mr. Davis, at Boston, that both those gentlemen may write to the attornies who act for the State and the district in Maine. An investigation ought to be set on foot; but I am not alarmed at such information, having received much of it in other places, which has not amounted to any thing serious in the end.[1] Mrs. Adams joins me in respects to your Excellency's lady. She has not been out of her chamber since she first entered it after our arrival, and is still very weak.

With great regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Trenton, 21 August, 1798.

SIR, — I inclose a letter which I received last evening under cover from M. Pedro Josef Caro, accompanied by a letter from Mr. King, intended as an introduction to M. Caro; but the latter having missed a passage to the United States, in the British cutter which sailed from Falmouth to New York on the 20th

[1] Governor Sumner's letter gives a curious account of a rumored French invasion of the district of Maine, and of the presence of some agent disseminating treason. All this, based upon the deposition of a single person! It furnishes a remarkable illustration of the disturbed condition of the times.

of April, and circumstances requiring his arrival in South America with as little delay as possible, he forwarded the packet to me. A copy of the translation of his letter to me I have the honor to inclose.

Under the same cover to me were inclosed two letters, one for Colonel Hamilton, the other for General Knox, which I forward by this post to those gentlemen.[1]

I am, with perfect respect, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

No. 1. (Inclosed.)

PEDRO JOSEF CARO TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(*Translation.*)

Falmouth, 10 May, 1798.

SIR, — The annexed letter of the Hon. Mr. King to you will serve as a credential in my favor, in presenting myself to you with the important mission it announces. An unforeseen accident has frustrated my voyage hence to your continent in His Majesty's cutter, which sailed for New York on the 20th April last; and, a combination of circumstances requiring my arrival in South America with as little delay as possible, I have received instructions immediately to depart by the shortest route of the leeward islands, and am ordered to communicate it to the government through the medium of you, by transmitting the pamphlet which I inclose, and which I should have conveyed personally. I pray you to be pleased to deliver it into the

[1] An extract of the letter to General Hamilton is to be found in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xiii. p. 291. It is quite obvious from the late publication of his works, that he, as well as the members of the cabinet in his confidence, contemplated an offensive war against Spain, both in the West Indies and South America. Hamilton to Gunn, *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 184, at the bottom of the page. McHenry to Hamilton, p. 283, and Hamilton to McHenry, same date, same page. Hamilton to Otis, vi. 391. Wilkinson's *Memoirs of my own Times*, vol. i. p. 440.

A remarkable indication of Mr. McHenry's acquaintance with these projects is seen in his answer to General Hamilton's letter, recommending General Wilkinson to promotion. Entertaining the suspicion, then common, that that officer was in the interest, if not in the pay of Spain, he declared him not fit to be trusted with the knowledge of any project of attack upon the possessions of that country. McHenry to Hamilton, vol. iv. p. 282.

hands of His Excellency the President; and, as eventually some answer may be practicable in so interesting a business, General Francis de Miranda, our compatriot and principal agent of all Spanish America in union, a person extremely well known, and in particular to the Hon. Mr. King, whose intervention is as to both parties safe and secret, will remain in London.

I also hope you will have the goodness to receive the first tribute of my respects in the Spanish language and style, as I am unable to render it in English, and that you will not confide the secret to interpreters that are not known.

Remaining with the greatest respect, &c.

PEDRO JOSEF CARO.

No. 2. (Inclosed.)

RUFUS KING TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

26 February, 1798.

(Extract.)

"Two points have, within a fortnight, been settled in the English cabinet respecting South America. If Spain is able to prevent the overthrow of her present government and to escape being brought under the entire control of France, England, between whom and Spain, notwithstanding the war, a certain understanding appears to exist, will at present engage in no scheme to deprive Spain of her possessions in South America. But if, as appears probable, the army destined against Portugal, and which will march through Spain, or any other means which may be employed by France, shall overthrow the Spanish government, and thereby place the resources of Spain and of her colonies at the disposal of France, England will immediately commence the execution of a plan, long since digested and prepared, for the complete independence of South America. If England engages in this plan, she will propose to the United States to coöperate in its execution. Miranda will be detained here under one pretence or another, until events shall decide the conduct of England. The revolution of Spain is decreed. The attempt will be made, and its success is scarcely doubtful. The President may, therefore, expect the overture of England, and

will, I am persuaded, act upon it under the influence of that wise and comprehensive policy which, looking forward to the destinies of the new world, shall, in the beginning, by great and generous deeds, lay deep and firm the foundations of lasting concord between its rising empires. If possible, I will bring together, and seasonably arrange and send to you, such information as I have been able to procure upon this interesting and very consequential subject, having found out and acquired the confidence of certain Jesuits, natives of South America, who, with a view to its independence, are, and for several years have been, in the service and pay of England. I have often conversed with them, and seen the reports which they have prepared for their employers. These communications throw much light upon the population, the revenues, the oppression, and the temper and character of the Spanish Americans."

No. 3. (Inclosed.)

RUFUS KING TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Extract.)

London, 6 April, 1798.

"South America must soon pass through a revolution. We have an immense interest in the event, as well as in the manner in which it shall be effected. In a former letter I have communicated to you the views and intentions of England, who will not promote the revolt, in case Spain shall be able to save herself from a revolution and keep the French out of Portugal. And though there seems little probability that this will be the case, England, since the arrival of Miranda here, but without his knowledge, has informed Spain, not only that she will not countenance or assist the Spanish colonies in becoming independent, but that she will join her in resisting the endeavors of others to accomplish it, provided that Spain will oppose the views of France against her own dominions, and those of Portugal. At the same time that this communication has been made to Spain, an expedition has been prepared, and the correspondent arrangements at Trinidad have been ordered, for the

purpose of beginning the revolution of South America. In this event, as I have before intimated to you, England will, at Philadelphia, open herself to, and ask the coöperation of, the United States. Miranda, who is impatient with the delays that he experiences, as well as ignorant of the provisional decisions of this cabinet, has concluded to send his friend and associate, Mr. Caro, to Philadelphia, with a letter for the President, and I have given him a letter to identify and introduce him to you. Conjecturing the intentions of France and knowing with precision those of England, we shall be the better able in season to consider and regulate the conduct that it shall be proper for us to pursue."

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 29 August, 1798.

Sir, — I have received your letter of August 20th, I believe, though the 0 is obscure. General Knox is gone to the eastward, as I understand, to return in ten or fifteen days. But if he were in Boston, I could not send him either your official or private letter, as neither contains sentiments that I can approve.[1] My opinion is and has always been clear, that as the law now stands, the order of nomination or of recording has no weight or effect, but that officers appointed on the same day, in whatever order, have a right to rank according to antecedent services. I made the nomination according to the list presented to me by you, from General Washington, in hopes that rank might be settled among them by agreement or acquiescence, believing at the time, and expressing to you that belief, that the nomination and appointment would give Hamilton no command at all, nor any rank before any Major-General. This is my opinion still. I am willing to settle all decisively at present (and have no fear of the consequences), by dating the commissions, Knox on the first day, Pinckney on the second, and Hamilton on the third. If this course is not taken, and the commissions are all

[1] Mr. McHenry, in writing these two letters, was merely following the dictation of Mr. Hamilton, who furnished the draft of one, and suggested the matter for the other. See his letter to Mr. McHenry 19th August, and the draft inclosed. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 338, 339.

made out on the same day, I tell you my opinion is clear that Hamilton will legally rank after Hand, and, I fear, even after Lee.

You speak to me of the expediency of attempting an alteration in the rank of the gentlemen in question. You know, Sir, that no rank has ever been settled by me. You know my opinion has always been, as it is now, that the order of names in the nomination and record was of no consequence.

General Washington has, through the whole, conducted with perfect honor and consistency. I said, and I say now, if I could resign to him the office of President, I would do it instantly, and with the highest pleasure; but I never said I would hold the office, and be responsible for its exercise, while he should execute it. Nor has he ever intimated a desire of the kind. He has always in all his letters said, that these points must ultimately depend on the President.

The power and authority are in the President. I am willing to exert this authority at this moment, and to be responsible for the exercise of it. All difficulties will in this way be avoided. But if it is to be referred to General Washington, or to mutual and amicable accommodation among the gentlemen themselves, I foresee it will come to me at last after much altercation and exasperation of passions, and I shall then determine it exactly as I should now, — Knox, Pinckney, and Hamilton.

There has been too much intrigue in this business with General Washington and me;[1] if I shall ultimately be the dupe of it, I am much mistaken in myself.

I can sympathize with you in your ill health, and the sickness

[1] Mr. McHenry took offence at this, as aimed at himself. He sought and obtained a disclaimer. But though not probably meant for him, the facts, as now disclosed, do not entirely acquit him of participation in the censure.

The purpose of this note will be to show that the remark itself was entirely just; and to a much greater extent than Mr. Adams himself had any conception of. The proof to sustain each of the following propositions is furnished from the testimony of the parties themselves.

Mr. Wolcott, who seems to have had no share in the matter, though by no means partial to Mr. Adams, admits in two successive letters that the difficulty grew out of mismanagement. See the letters in Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 99, 101.

The facts appear to be these:

1. That on the 7th of July Mr. Adams addressed to General Washington a letter, informing him of his appointment to the chief command. See page 575.

2. That he charged Mr. McHenry, Secretary of War, with the care of this letter, and with instructions which were drawn up and dated on the 6th July. See page 573.

of your family. My dear Mrs. Adams has been at the point of death, and, although a little recovered, is still extremely weak and low.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

3. That Mr. Pickering, the Secretary of State, knowing what was done on the 6th, and that Mr. McHenry was not to go till the 8th, anticipated the mission, by sending a letter, *on that very day*, the 6th, by the post, to General Washington, urging upon him the selection of Mr. Hamilton as second in command, and invoking him to "intimate his opinion" to the President, in such a way as to force the appointment. See Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. Appendix, p. 530.

4. Mr. Pickering's low estimate of General Washington's military capacity is well understood, and, if doubted, can be established beyond question. In making this movement, he avowed his purpose to be that Mr. Hamilton should be the virtual Commander-in-chief. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 344.

5. Mr. Hamilton came to Philadelphia on the 7th of July, before Mr. McHenry had left for Mount Vernon. He was then informed by Mr. Pickering of what had been done, and he saw a copy of the secret letter. *Hamilton's Works*, Pickering to Hamilton, vol. vi. p. 325. Also Pickering to Jay, p. 330.

6. Mr. Hamilton, instead of expressing any displeasure at this clandestine attempt to control the President, in his favor, wrote a letter on the 8th of July, fortifying the argument of Mr. Pickering, and disparaging the judgment of the President, and sent it *by the hands of the President's own messenger*, Mr. McHenry, who certainly was cognisant of its purpose. This was, to direct all the appointments to be made by the President. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. Appendix, p. 533.

7. General Washington, although anxious to secure the services of Mr. Hamilton, and to give him the post he had himself selected in a preceding letter of the 2d of June, that of Inspector-General, did not contemplate making him the second in command. His design had been to make Mr. Pinckney second, and Mr. Hamilton third in rank, and this for reasons which he explained directly to Mr. Pickering, and as delicately as possible to Mr. Hamilton himself. With this last letter Mr. Adams was made acquainted. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 294. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. pp. 257–260, 263–266.

8. Mr. Pickering, on first receiving a report of General Washington's state of mind, from Mr. McHenry, was disposed to claim for his letter of the 6th the merit of turning the scale for Mr. Hamilton; but apparently discouraged for the moment by the contents of General Washington's reply to him, dated the 11th, he communicated the substance of it to Mr. Hamilton on the 16th, and sounded his disposition to give way. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 325, p. 330.

9. Mr. Hamilton replied on the 17th, expressing a reluctant assent to the possible priority of Knox, but objecting to the precedence of Pinckney, and concluding with a proposition that the relative rank might be left open for future settlement. This letter, though received by Mr. Pickering in season to meet the wishes both of the President and of General Washington, was by him suppressed until after the list of officers, as originally arranged by General Washington, had been sent to the Senate. In that list Mr. Hamilton's name had been placed first, although it is now clear that General Washington did not mean to settle his rank by the act. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 326, 343.

The Senate did not, however, know this, when they ratified the nominations. There is reason to believe they were left with the impression that he did intend it.

10. General Washington was prevailed upon to overcome his "fears of the consequences" of placing Hamilton first in his list, by the representations made

TO JOHN JAY.

Quincy, 30 August, 1798.

Sir, — I had last night the pleasure to receive the letter your Excellency did me the honor to write me on the 21st instant,

to him through the channel of Mr. McHenry, that such was "the declared will of the federal characters of Congress." This he expressly states in his letters to General Knox. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. pp. 268, 282. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 330.

11. General Knox wrote a warm remonstrance. In it, among other things, he says: "I have understood, that when the list was presented to the Senate, some members, from a mere sense of justice, were desirous that the seniority I held the last war should be considered; but they were silenced by the observation, that the list was yours, and therefore it could not be altered. To you, *it was declared* to be the public estimation." Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. Appendix, p. 535.

12. General Washington, on the 9th of August, sent this letter to Mr. Hamilton, with a letter of his own, delicately intimating a disposition favorable to Knox. This hint had the effect of procuring a reluctant acquiescence of Mr. Hamilton "in any arrangement which Washington might deem for the general good." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 336–8, 342.

13. The President did not consider the order of nominations to the Senate as in itself deciding the priority of the officers named. And so doubtful was Mr. Pickering of the issue, that it led to a renewal of efforts to rouse General Washington to interfere, as he was looked to finally to control the President. To this end Mr. Pickering wrote, on the 21st of August, to stimulate Mr. Hamilton "to take such steps with the General, as he might think proper, to fix him in the station which the essential interests of the country require." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 346. On the other hand Mr. Hamilton, on the 29th, wrote to stimulate Mr. Pickering to make the General "well understand that New England would rather see high command in his hands than in those of General Knox." Vol. vi. p. 355.

14. It is to be noted that Mr. Hamilton, in addressing General Knox many months after the decision, endeavored to throw off the responsibility of it from himself upon others. "Be persuaded, also," he says, "that the views of others, *not my own*, have given shape to what has taken place, and that there has been a serious struggle between my respect and attachment for you and the impression of duty." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 403.

15. It likewise appears that Mr. Pickering in a letter of the same date as that last cited, covered the confidential letter of Miranda to Mr. Hamilton of the 6th of April, announcing the successful progress of his enterprise in England; and the reply of the latter to Miranda, dated the 22d of August, besides describing a plan of coöperation, announces that "we are raising an army of about twelve thousand men," and that he is "appointed second in command." Miranda's application to the President had been received by him on the 25th of August. He knew the fact that Mr. Hamilton had received a letter, but nothing more. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 343, 348.

The curious reader is left carefully to compare these propositions with the letters quoted to verify them, and then form his own opinion, whether Mr. Adams was right or wrong in saying, "there has been too much intrigue in this business with General Washington and me." He is, also, to judge how far the project of Miranda contributed to stimulate the desire of Mr. Hamilton and his friends to secure for him the virtual command of the army.

inclosing the resolutions of the senate and assembly of New York, and their unanimous address. I can scarcely imagine any event that could do me more honor, or give me greater satisfaction. The unanimity of New York, of vast importance in the Union, is a happy omen of success and prosperity to this country. I pray you, Sir, to accept of my sincere thanks for the affectionate and obliging manner in which you have communicated to me this important proceeding of your legislature.

With great respect, Sir, esteem and affection,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 3 September, 1798.

SIR, — I pray you to put on the list of captains of infantry, Mr. Philip Church, of New York, who is very handsomely recommended by General Hamilton, and whom, from a personal acquaintance with him, I believe to be well qualified.[1]

I inclose to you also a letter and documents from his Excellency Governor Jackson, of Georgia, which I pray you to consider and answer according to those arrangements which you have made for the general service. We ought to give all the attention in our power to Georgia, which is not only much exposed, but of much importance in the defence of the nation.

Inclosed, also, are recommendations of Aaron Mann, of Providence, and William Hunt, of Massachusetts.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Quincy, 4 September, 1798.

SIR, — I have received your favor of the 22d of August, recommending Colonel Tousard to be Inspector of Artillery.

1 Mr. Hamilton, in his letter, says of this application in behalf of his nephew: "Under these circumstances, very contrary to the general rules by which I govern myself, I take the liberty to request his appointment as a personal favor to myself, and I venture to undertake for him that he will not discredit it. The appointment will also lay himself and all his friends under a particular obligation. Let me at the same time beg you to be persuaded, Sir, that I shall never on any other occasion place a recommendation to office on a similar footing."

I have no reason to suspect that your entire confidence in his honor and fidelity is misplaced. But as his native country is France, and his speech betrays his origin, I am very apprehensive that in a French war neither the army nor the people would be without their jealousies and suspicions, which might be very injurious to the service.

I shall take the subject into consideration, and your judgment will have great weight. There has already been so much uneasiness expressed on account of the French officers in the artillery, that I expect much difficulty.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 4 September, 1798.

Sir, — I return you Mr. Adams's[1] letters, Nos. 121, 122, and 123, and one not numbered, dated June 5th, together with Mr. Pitcairn's of June 1st.

I agree with you in opinion[2] concerning Mr. Adams's idea of a contingent stipulation with Sweden, respecting neutral ships neutralizing the goods on board, and, if the heads of department agree with us, you may send an instruction to that purpose.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 10 September, 1798.

Sir, — Inclosed is a letter from a Colonel Perkins, who has commanded Castle William these dozen years, which, after you have read it, I pray you to give to the Secretary of War, to be minuted and filed among the applications for appointments.

I wish to be informed whether you have written an answer

[1] J. Q. Adams.

[2] Mr. Pickering had written on the 28th of August, as follows:

"Mr. Adams's idea of a contingent stipulation with Sweden, respecting neutral ships neutralizing the goods on board, strikes me as very eligible; and, as he observes, will prevent our becoming the victims to the rule, that *free ships make free goods*, if our enemy does not adhere to it."

to his Excellency Governor Sumner, accepting the offer of Castle Island; and if you have not, that you would be so good as to answer it as soon as you conveniently can; or, if you think it more proper, that you would send the papers to me, and I will answer them. It is high time we had an officer and garrison on that island. There are recruits enough in Boston, Marblehead, Portland, and Vermont, as I am informed.

The long continued sickness of Mrs. Adams distresses me very severely. She has been out of her chamber but three times since she came home, and then to ride half a mile only. Your amiable family, I hope, enjoy perfect health.

P. S. What is your opinion of Dumouriez's *Tableau spéculatif de l'Europe?* Whether a general war or a universal peace should take place in Europe, I think it is plain, that in either case we ought to be prepared at all points, especially with our floating citadels; for no peace they can make, however universal it may be, can be lasting.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 September, 1798.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 6th, and approve of your determination to make out the commissions in the order of Knox on the first day, Pinckney on the second, and Hamilton on the third. This being done, you may call Generals Knox and Hamilton into service as soon as you please.

Your request, to be informed whether I attach any portion of the intrigues, which I alluded to, if any have been employed, to you, is reasonable; and I have no scruple to acknowledge that your conduct through the whole towards me has been candid. I have suspected, however, that extraordinary pains were taken with you to impress upon your mind that the public opinion and the unanimous wish of the federalists was, that General Hamilton might be first, and even Commander-in-chief; that you might express this opinion to General Washington more forcibly than I should have done; and that this determined him

to make the arrangement as he did.[1] If this suspicion was well founded, I doubt not you made the representation with integrity. I am not and never was of the opinion that the public opinion demanded General Hamilton for the first, and I am now clear that it never expected nor desired any such thing.

The question being now settled, the responsibility for which I take upon myself, I have no hard thoughts concerning your conduct in this business, and I hope you will make your mind easy concerning it.

I have the honor, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 September, 1798.

SIR, — I have received your favor of the 4th, and return you the blank commissions signed, and all the papers inclosed in yours.

As to Major Brooks, I know not how a man can talk of fighting "French bloodhounds" who has been capable of saying, since his appointment, that things were going very well before the arrival of the despatches of the envoys, but the publication of those despatches had ruined every thing. He must have a very loose head, if he has an honest heart. I will leave it to you and Mr. Stoddert to determine this affair according to your best judgments. The gentleman is to me a total stranger. If

[1] A striking confirmation of this suspicion is found in Mr. Pickering's letter to Mr. Jay, in which he gives Mr. McHenry's report to him of the visit to Mount Vernon. It seems that McHenry admitted that "General Washington was some time balancing between the priority of Colonel Hamilton and General Pinckney; weighing the high respectability and importance of the latter in the three southern States, against the superior talents of the former; the latter finally preponderating." The fact is fully established by Washington's own letters since printed. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 330.

Mr. Pickering goes on to claim the decision as the result of his letter of the 6th, sent in advance of Mr. McHenry, which he says General Washington did not mention to that gentleman. But he did not probably know of the secret letter sent by Mr. Hamilton, through McHenry himself — a letter, the objects of which McHenry must have understood, and which his desire for Hamilton's success undoubtedly fortified through his conversation. Hence the probability is that the position finally taken by General Washington was the result of all three influences combined. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 352, 355.

you think it safe to trust him, I will; if not, arrange him some other way.

General North's letter I do not admire. I mean neither to plead, stipulate, nor negotiate with him about his acceptance. I had no idea of impressing him into the service. He may accept or reject his appointment as he pleases, unequivocally. I shall give him no other command or appointment. Upon his future behavior will depend his future appointments.

I pray you to reply to the corps of horse of Warren county, North Carolina, according to your own ideas. The others are approved by your humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 13 September, 1798.

SIR, — I have received your favor of the 6th, and thank you for a letter of credit on General Lincoln for $766.66, of which I shall receive from time to time such sums as I shall have occasion for, and give receipts, as you propose.

My steward is at Trenton ferry, on the Pennsylvania side of the river, at the ferry house.

The distress of the poor at Philadelphia is so great, that I pray you to subscribe and pay for me, under the title of a friend, and to let nobody know but yourself from whom it comes, five hundred dollars.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 14 September, 1798.

SIR, — I return Mr. Adams's letter, No. 120, with the inclosure, and Dr. Rush's letter of September 1st, which I received in yours of the 7th of this month.

I am not at all mortified at the delay of the treaties with Prussia or Sweden, having no ardent desire of any treaties, till the crisis in Europe is more decided.

General Marshall or Bushrod Washington will succeed Judge Wilson, if you have not some other gentleman to propose, who in your opinion can better promote the public honor and interest. Marshall is first in age, rank, and public services, probably not second in talents. Although I have an ancient esteem for Judge Rush and the Doctor, it is not sufficient to make any alteration in my judgment in this case. As Virginia has no judge at present, she is as much entitled as Pennsylvania to attention.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 16 September, 1798.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 11th. I wish I understood better than I do the conduct both of General Pinckney and Mr. Gerry.

I shall not be guilty of so much affectation of regard to science, as to be very willing to grant passports to Dupont de Nemours or any other French philosophers, in the present situation of our country.[1] We have had too many French philosophers already, and I really begin to think, or rather to suspect, that learned academies, not under the immediate inspection and control of government, have disorganized the world, and are incompatible with social order. Mr. King judges correctly of the American government, that it has no disposition to give any encouragement to the mission of the Directory. I hope he conjectures equally well of the English.

Inclosed is a letter, received last night, from Mr. Higginson, of September 18th, which I recommend to the consideration of the heads of department.

[1] Mr. Pickering had written thus:

"Dupont de Nemours and some other French philosophers, "a delegation from the National Institute," had applied, through Sir Joseph Banks, for passports from the English government, the Directory having given them passports to go to the United States, with the view to improve and extend the sciences. Mr. King understands the intention of the mission is to form an establishment high up the Mississippi, out of the limits of the United States, and within the boundaries of Spain. Mr. King supposes that neither the American nor English government will be disposed to give any encouragement to this mission of the Directory."

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 26 September, 1798.

I had the honor of your letter of the 19th, last night, and have read the inclosures.

Dr. Rush's letter gives me pleasure, because the number of disappointed candidates is diminished by it by one.

Mr. Sitgreaves's letter is frank, candid, and agreeable. But, although this gentleman has merit and talents held in high esteem by his country as well as by me, I cannot help thinking that a few years of service, in stations less exalted than the bench of the United States, may reasonably be expected from him.

Mr. Lee's letter deserves great attention. The name, the connections, the character, the merit, and abilities of Mr. Washington[1] are greatly respected. But I still think that General Marshall ought to be preferred. Of the three envoys, the conduct of Marshall alone has been entirely satisfactory, and ought to be marked by the most decided approbation of the public. He has raised the American people in their own esteem, and if the influence of truth and justice, reason and argument, is not lost in Europe, he has raised the consideration of the United States in that quarter of the world. He is older at the bar than Mr. Washington; and you and I know by experience that seniority at the bar is nearly as much regarded as it is in the army. If Mr. Marshall should decline, I should next think of Mr. Washington. It is true that some regard to States ought to be always remembered; but Pennsylvania has always had a judge, Virginia has had none since the resignation of Mr. Blair. As far as States can have reasonable pretensions, therefore, those of Virginia are at least equal to those of Pennsylvania. Thus the subject appears to me. If you are of a different opinion I pray you to inform me, or if any more meritorious candidate than Mr. Marshall occurs to you, I hope you will mention him to, Sir, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] Bushrod Washington.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 28 September, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I have received your letter of September 20th, and return you the commission for a Judge of the Supreme Court, signed, leaving the name and date blank. You will fill the blank with the name of Marshall, if he will accept it; if not, with that of Bushrod Washington. I cannot blame the former, if he should decline; of the latter, I have always heard the most agreeable accounts.[1]

I have also received your letter of the 21st, with its inclosures and the extract from General Marshall's letter. I am of his opinion, that the world has seldom seen more extraordinary letters than those of Talleyrand.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 30 September, 1798.

I have received your favor of the 24th, and have read carefully all the inclosures. Such as ought to remain in your office I return, inclosed in this.

There is nothing that requires any remarks from me, because I think all is well considered and well done. It may not, however, be amiss to observe to Mr. Adams, that he need not be solicitous about his success in making treaties with Prussia and Sweden at present; that I am fully convinced, as he is, that both will affect to refuse any treaty upon the terms in his instructions. This will not alarm me at all, and if both powers finally refuse to agree to any stipulations without the articles in

[1] Mr. Washington was appointed. Mr. Marshall declined. In his letter to the Secretary of State, dated 28 September, he says:

"I pray you to make my respectful and grateful acknowledgments to the President for the very favorable sentiments concerning me, which are indicated by his willingness to call me to so honorable and important a station as that of a Judge of the United States. The considerations, which are insurmountable, oblige me to decline the office. I can assure you, that I shall ever estimate properly, both the dispositions of the President, and the polite and friendly manner in which you have communicated them."

contemplation, we shall not be very uneasy. Our commerce is of more consequence to them, than theirs to us; and with or without treaties we shall have all we want. But we should be very improvident, at the moment of being forced into a war, to bind ourselves to permit France and her colonies to be supplied with every thing, even our own produce, in Prussian and Swedish or Danish ships.

JOHN ADAMS.

The Constitution's prize must be tried and fairly determined by law. I hope and believe that care will be taken that no suspicions of plundering any thing may arise.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.[1]

Quincy, 1 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favors of the 20th, 21st, and 24th of September. I am sorry that Captain Barry has not fully answered your expectations; but I hope you will soon send him out again. The hurricanes are now passed, and there is no longer danger from them. We must sweep the West India seas, and get as many of the French seamen, as they are called, whether they are Italians, Spaniards, Germans, or negroes, as we can. Seamen are so scarce that they cannot send out large privateers.

I thank you for your humane and wise directions to the Navy Agent at Norfolk. The captives ought to have able and honorable counsel, and I rely upon the impartial justice of our tribunals, for their honorable acquittal, if the law and the truth require it. The suppression of ship's papers is a suspicious fact. If they have cruised and plundered Americans, there cannot be much hesitation. I cannot conceive there can be any difficulty in procuring evidence to show clearly the guilt or innocence of the ship.[2]

[1] The navy department had been organized in the month of May preceding, and Mr. Stoddert of Maryland, had been made the first secretary.

[2] This was a ship of twenty-four guns sent into Hampton roads by Captain

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 3 October, 1798.

Dear Sir, — Inclosed is a duplicate of a letter from Miranda, with some estimates. Read it and think of it. A number of questions and considerations occur. We are friends with Spain. If we were enemies, would the project be useful to us? It will not be in character for me to answer the letter. Will any notice of it, in any manner, be proper? I shall send it by Mr. Humphreys with Mr. Gerry's papers.[1]

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Quincy, 9 October, 1798.

Sir, — I received, yesterday, the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 25th of September.[2]

You request to be informed, whether my determination to preserve the order of the three major-generals is final; and whether I mean to appoint another adjutant-general without your concurrence. I presume that before this day you have

Nicholson, on a suspicion of piracy. Mr. Stoddert was inclined to believe the vessel filled with French refugees under British protection. In his letter, he says:

"I have written to the Navy Agent at Norfolk, to liberate, on parole, the officers and owners, if they are confined, unless there are stronger reasons than I am informed of, to suspect them of piracy; and to tell them they have nothing to apprehend, if innocent. And I have desired him to recommend them to able and honorable counsel, which I have no doubt will meet with your approbation."

[1] On the 11th, Mr. Pickering acknowledges the reception from Mr. Humphreys, of "the despatches of Mr. Gerry and others," but he takes no notice of the questions.

[2] Sparks's *Washington's Writings*, vol. xi. p. 304. A marked difference is visible in the tone and sentiment of this letter and of that addressed to Mr. Hamilton on the 14th of July. Vol. xi. p. 265. In the latter, General Washington clearly designates Mr. Pinckney as the next to him in command; in the former, he says he intended the rank to be in the order of the names on his list. In the one, he complains of any variation from his list as an infraction of the condition of his acceptance, in the other, he distinctly alludes to the President as having a right to use his pleasure in the last resort. One explanation of this change is to be found in the gradual action of third persons upon General Washington, by naming individuals, known to be much disliked by him, as likely to obtain appointments.

received information from the Secretary of War, that I some time ago signed the three commissions and dated them on the same day, in hopes, similar to yours, that an amicable adjustment, or acquiescence, might take place among the gentlemen themselves. But, if these hopes should be disappointed and controversies should arise, they will, of course, be submitted to you as Commander-in-chief, and if, after all, any one should be so obstinate as to appeal to me from the judgment of the Commander-in-chief, I was determined to confirm that judgment. Because, whatever construction may be put upon the resolutions of the ancient Congress, which have been applied to this case, and whether they are at all applicable to it or not, there is no doubt to be made that, by the present Constitution of the United States, the President has authority to determine the rank of officers.

I have been for some time prepared in my own mind to nominate Mr. Dayton to be Adjutant-General, in case of the refusal of Mr. North. Several others have occurred and been suggested to me, but none who in point of science or literature, political and military merit, or energy of character, appear to be equal to him. If you have any other in contemplation, I pray you to mention him to the Secretary at War, who may fill up his commission immediately, in case Mr. North declines.

I hope your own health and Mrs. Washington's are perfect. Mine is very indifferent, and Mrs. Adams's extremely low. Confined to the bed of sickness for two months, her destiny is still very precarious, and mine in consequence of it.[1]

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] This letter was probably the consequence of one addressed to Mr. Adams by Mr. Wolcott, on the 17th of the preceding month, wherein an earnest effort was made to heal a misunderstanding, which was widening into a breach, between the President and General Washington. On the 19th, Mr. Wolcott wrote to Mr. Hamilton, urging him to remain quiet, and expressing the conviction that "the embarrassment might have been entirely avoided." In this Mr. Wolcott is doubtless correct, and by his more skilful tact Mr. Adams was ultimately induced to concede the point. But an imperfect draft of a letter, designed to be a reply to Mr. Wolcott, remains among the papers, which shows how accurately Mr. Adams understood the true position which General Washington had, at first, intended to occupy, and the uses that had been made of both. As explaining his views and feelings, the greater part of it is not without interest. Mr. Wolcott's letter is printed in full in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. pp. 93 – 99.

Quincy, 24 September, 1798.

I have received your favor of the 17th, and read it over and over again, with

TO C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Quincy, 10 October, 1798.

The session of Congress approaches faster than I can prepare for it in the afflicted state of my family and tottering state of my frame. I request you to consider whether Congress can meet in Philadelphia with safety to their persons, and also to

all the attention I am master of. The long continued dangerous sickness of my best friend, and her still precarious destiny, have thrown my mind into a state of depression, agitation, and anxiety, which will not admit of a full discussion of the various points on which you and I appear to differ in opinion. I will hint at a few things, which I see in a different light from that in which you have placed them.

In the first place, I am under no apprehension at all for the *honor*, *personal influence*, or *character* of the chief of our nation, whether he places General Knox first or General Hamilton. If he thought for one moment that both those generals together could hurt his honor, diminish his personal influence, or injure his character, he would resign his office at once. This point, therefore, I hope is settled between you and me forever.

You are perfectly correct in your opinion, that General Washington has never disclosed a wish to interfere with any of the powers constitutionally vested in the President. However perfect the concert between the President and Commander-in-chief, it will remain for time to discover, whether such jealousy, rivalry, and animosity will not be produced by the conflicting passions of powerful individuals, as no authority in this country can possibly compose. That is to say, in other words, it is a problem whether our Constitution can possibly command an army and conduct a war.

Whether General Washington was, or was not, nominated to command the armies without any previous consultation or notice, is nothing to the present questions, nor has any one, that I know of, any motive or authority to inquire into this point. I had evidence enough to convince me that he expected it, that he wished it, and that he would accept it. Otherwise I never would have nominated him.

That General Washington formed a list out of names that I had committed to paper to be laid before him, is true; that after mature deliberation he settled the rank, which, in his judgment, the officers in question ought to enjoy, I do not admit and cannot believe. It was never the advice of General Washington, as I understood it, that the Inspector-General should be the *first* Major-General. He never expressed any such idea to me. His list contained no such idea. When Mr. McHenry proposed to me to nominate him to the Senate as first Major-General, I positively refused to do it. On the contrary, in the letter from General Washington to General Hamilton, which Mr. McHenry showed to me and which has never escaped my memory, General Washington's expectation and inclination, that General Pinckney should be the first Major-General, was not equivocal. And besides, he expressly says: "After all, the whole must depend upon the President." * Not one circumstance ever indicated that General Washington's advice or wish was that General Hamilton should be first Major-General. On the contrary, his expectation and desire were clear to me that Pinckney should be first.† As to the expectation of the public, I have had

* The words are: "For after all, it rests with the President to use his pleasure." See the whole letter, Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. pp. 263–267.

† See page 586, note, for a summary of the evidence on this point.

write me your sentiments of the particulars which ought to be inserted in the speech. I shall be obliged, by the long continued sickness of Mrs. Adams and her consequent weakness, to remain here till the last moment, and set out only soon enough to meet

longer experience and better opportunities to know both than you have, and I am not so clearly of your opinion.

General Washington's list gave no command to Hamilton, but as Inspector-General. The Commander-in-chief might occasionally give him command. It was plain to me from his list, that General Washington meant to leave the rank to be settled by friendly agreement among the gentlemen, or by subsequent orders of the Lieutenant-General, or by a subsequent appeal to the President. I am persuaded that no personal considerations, distinct from the public interest, have influenced General Washington, and I know that none have influenced me. General Knox is no favorite of mine, any more than General Hamilton. I have no kind of attachment to him or affection for him, more than for Hamilton. He never was my intimate nor my friend, and he has no kind of attachment to me, more than Hamilton. If you are not informed, I am, that Knox never served my interest, fame, or promotion more than Hamilton. Nay, further, I know he has opposed me more than ever Hamilton did, although in the earlier part of his life I contributed more than any man, perhaps, to recommend him, merely on public principles, to General Washington, Lee, &c., who first promoted him so rapidly. Knox, however, went through the war with honor and dignity; and he is universally acknowledged to be brave, cool, attentive, and able at all times, and good humored, as well as alert, active, and undaunted in the day of battle. I know not why such an officer should be disgraced or degraded.

The resolutions of the old Congress are not the only grounds, nor the principal ground, of my opinion, that, as matters now are circumstanced, Hamilton is the last in rank of the Major-Generals. The office of Inspector-General gives no rank. The rank of Major-General, given him in his nomination and commission, will give him rank before Brigadiers, but after every Major-General commissioned on the same day. The rank of Major-General, and the office and command of Major-General, are different things. As the case now stands, Hamilton will rank after Lee and Hand as well as Pinckney and Knox. This is not my intention. This may be remedied by dating the commissions of Lee and Hand after that of Hamilton, it is true; but if something is not done, you will find the pretensions of Lee and Hand set up.

I have seen more of General Washington's letters upon this subject than you have, or Mr. McHenry; and in my opinion it would be more discreet to say less about him upon this occasion than has been said.*

I am not of your opinion, that either Knox or Hamilton will refuse, whatever may be their relative rank.† If I were sure that both would refuse, it should make no alteration. For, be assured, I stand in no awe of either.

You seem to consider the affair as a measure of finance, and if I was fully convinced that the appointment of Hamilton would produce economical regulations of any great consequence, it would have great weight with me. For, be assured, there is not a democrat in the world who affects more horror than I really feel, at the prospect of that frightful system of debts and taxes, into which imperious necessity seems to be precipitating us.

If I should consent to the appointment of Hamilton as second in rank, I should consider it as the most responsible action of my whole life, and the most difficult

* This seems to imply a knowledge of General Washington's letters to General Knox of the 16th July and the 9th of August, in which the former clearly shows that the appointment of Hamilton, to be second, was not his original purpose. See Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. pp. 268, 282.

† In this he proved mistaken. General Knox did decline to serve under Hamilton.

Congress on the first Monday in December, which will make it desirable to me to receive your sentiments as early as possible, that I may make some arrangements in season.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 14 October, 1798.

I received last night your favor of the 5th. The letter for our minister at Berlin shall be forwarded as you desire; and, thank you for despatching the instructions to the collectors and the commission to Mr. Bushrod Washington.

There were two young gentlemen, nephews to the General, who were at college when my family was in Philadelphia, and

to justify. Hamilton is not a native of the United States, but a foreigner, and, I believe, has not resided longer, at least not much longer, in North America, than Albert Gallatin. His rank in the late army was comparatively very low. His merits with a party are the merits of John Calvin, —

"Some think on Calvin heaven's own spirit fell,
While others deem him instrument of hell."

I know that Knox has no popular character, even in Massachusetts. I know, too, that Hamilton has no popular character in any part of America.

I have given so much attention to your representation, that I have dated the commissions to Knox, Pinckney, and Hamilton, all on the same day, in hopes that under the auspices of General Washington the gentlemen may come to some amicable settlement of the dispute. The rank of the other Major-Generals, as well as of the Brigadiers, must be settled by the date of their commissions. I shall do all in my power to persuade Knox to accept.

This hasty letter, written in deep affliction, is fit only to be private and confidential; but I hope it will appear wherever yours appears.

[1] A similar form was addressed to all the other cabinet-officers. Mr. Pickering answered it on the 5th of November, submitting the heads only of what he should recommend for the message. These were: 1. A review of Mr. Gerry's transactions in France. 2. The final settlement of the St. Croix boundary. 3. The commencement of the fixing the boundary with Spain on the South. 4. Determined preparations for war, which may prevent it.

The replies of Mr. Wolcott and of Mr. Stoddert are published in the work of Mr. Gibbs. The former consists of the draft which had been prepared after consultation with Mr. Hamilton. Vol. ii. p. 115, pp. 168–171.

Mr. McHenry's letter is dated the 25th of November. It urges the composition of such a message as would lead Congress to a declaration of war with France; it suggests the mention of the surrender by Spain of two posts on the east bank of the Mississippi, and a recommendation of the investment in the President of full power to take possession of Louisiana and the Floridas, on behalf of Spain, in case of danger of their being seized by the French.

Mr. Lee's answer is dated the 27th of October, and relates to the place of meeting of Congress. He recommends Baltimore, in case the fever should continue in Philadelphia. In a later paper he dilates mainly upon the alien and sedition laws.

sometimes visited us, who appeared to me to be promising young men. I wish you would suggest to Mr. McHenry to make some inquiry about them, and find out whether they are proper for any appointment in the army, or otherwise, and whether they are desirous of public employment. The delicacy which has restrained the family, may do injustice to them and the public, if some precautions are not taken.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 15 October, 1798.

I have received yours of the 6th, and thank you for the intelligence from the southward.

The effervescence at Madrid, as well as the news from Naples, coincides with Mr. King's letter; and the news from Trieste confirms or rather favors the account that Bonaparte's destination was the Adriatic, not Egypt; but we must wait for further *éclaircissements*.

Mr. Sullivan's letter gives me apprehension that our friend Benson has been stretching himself, in order to be perfectly upright, until he has bent backwards. But, according to the law and to the testimony, we must submit to the decision; but the very map they have made is a demonstration to me that our claim is just.[1]

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Private.)

Quincy, 15 October, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I received your answer to the address from Virginia, concinnate and consummate. My secretary gave a hint of it to Mrs. Adams, and she insisted upon his bringing it to her bedside and reading it to her. She desires me to tell you that, weak and low as she is, she has spirit enough left to be delighted with it. She says it is the best answer to an address that ever was written. You may well suppose that I, who am so severely reflected upon by these compliments, am

[1] This relates to the decision of the commissioners, of whom Mr. Egbert Benson was one, upon the boundary, named as the river St. Croix, in the treaty of 1783.

disposed enough to think them extravagant. I, however, think the answer excellent, and wish you had to answer all the saucy addresses I have received. I do not intend to answer any more of the disrespectful ones.[1]

TO RUFUS KING.

Quincy, 16 October, 1798.

The inclosed letter from the Secretary of State, I pray you to convey in safety and as soon as may be to Berlin. I ought not to omit this opportunity to thank you for the pamphlets you have sent me from time to time. They not only entertain and amuse me, but I flatter myself are useful. Our country seems to be, as we used to say in 1774, unanimous and firm. They are much more so now than they were then. New York and Pennsylvania were always a little *chancelantes*, but they will be kept tolerably steady. There are strong pillars in both. But, watchman, what of the night? Where is all tending? I am weary of conjectures. Will princes ever be more wise, or people more temperate or united, or aristocrats more willing to acknowledge a superior?

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 16 October, 1798.

I have received your favor of the 11th, and return you three warrants signed, which you may fill up for General Collot, Mr. Schweitzer, and the person mentioned in Mr. King's letter, if he is to be found.

I could trust the heads of department with this power, rather than my own judgment. But, I think, we ought to give the

[1] As Mr. Pickering has quoted this note, it is deemed but just to insert it in the present collection. But at this distance of time the praise appears to savor too much of partisan feeling. The sharp reply to the address placed Mr. Adams, on the one side, in the attitude of combat with the opposition, and on the other, involved him with Mr. Gerry. The course marked out at the close of the letter commends itself to the judgment in all similar cases. But addresses and answers have, very properly, gone entirely out of vogue.

act a strict construction, and therefore doubt the propriety of delegating the authority.[1]

I am cheerfully of Mr. Wolcott's opinion, that the Secretary of State ought to be the person intrusted with the taking of the proofs permitted to be given by aliens to establish their innocence, in order to obtain licenses to remain in the United States, for all cases within a reasonable distance from the seat of government, and hereby authorize and request you to insert the Secretary of State accordingly.[2]

Inclosed is a power to you to attend to the business of the navy office in the absence of Mr. Stoddert.

TO JOHN JAY.

Quincy, 17 October, 1798.

I received last night your favor of the 26th of November, with a copy of an act of the legislature of the State of New York, for the further defence of the State and for other purposes. I shall transmit these papers to the Secretary at War, that a proper consultation may be had upon their contents, and a final arrangement made, according to rules which generally obtain in such cases.

In the mean time, that no moments may be lost, I shall not hesitate to comply with your Excellency's request, so far as to authorize General Hamilton to concert with you the plan of laying out the money in question to the best advantage, and to appoint him to superintend the execution of it. I must, however, at the same time, make a reservation of this condition, namely, that this act of the executive authority of the United States shall not be understood to have any influence on any

[1] This was in answer to the following application by Mr. Pickering:

"I have now the honor to inclose some copies of an order for requiring the departure of aliens, pursuant to the act of Congress, passed the 25th of June last. If the form of the order meets your approbation, I respectfully submit to your consideration, whether, during your absence from the seat of government, it may not be expedient to authorize the heads of departments to confer and decide on such alien cases as shall appear to require despatch. Should you think the law admits of this delegation of authority, and it should at the same time appear to you expedient, you will be pleased to sign and return the blank orders now inclosed."

[2] A second letter of the same date suggested that, in case of the President's having a doubt of the expediency or legality of delegating the power under the alien law, he should sign orders for the three persons designated; and it further mentioned the opinion of Mr. Wolcott, which Mr. Adams confirms.

question or questions which may hereafter come before the legislature of the United States, and may be proper only for their determination.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Quincy, 17 October, 1798.

I received last night a letter from his Excellency Governor Jay, inclosing a copy of an act of the legislature of New York for the further defence of that State, and for other purposes. The Governor observes that it appears to be the intention of that act that the money appropriated in it, $150,000, shall be laid out only in the manner which the national government will recognize as useful and advisable, and his Excellency proposes to my consideration whether it would not be expedient to authorize Major-General Hamilton, as a national officer, in whom great confidence may be placed, to concert with the Governor the plan of laying out the money to the best advantage, and to appoint the General to superintend the execution of it. I have not hesitated to comply with the Governor's request, saving all rights of the legislature of the United States. Accordingly, I hereby request you to concert with his Excellency to superintend the execution of it, at least until some other arrangements shall be made, if any other should hereafter be thought expedient.

With great esteem, &c.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 20 October, 1798.

Sir, — The very obliging manner in which you were pleased to assure me of the appointment of my nephew Philip Church, and the actual appointment of my relation Captain Hamilton to a lieutenancy in the navy, which I just learn from the marine department, are circumstances from which I derive much pleasure, which I consider as conferring upon me a personal obligation, and for which I beg you to accept my very cordial acknowledgments.

With perfect respect and esteem,

A. Hamilton.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 20 October, 1798.

Dear Sir, — There are many things which deserve to be maturely considered before the meeting of Congress. I shall mention two or three at present, concerning which I pray you to take as early measures as possible to obtain the advice of the heads of departments. One of them is, whether it will be expedient for the President to recommend to the consideration of Congress a declaration of war against France. This question supposes that France shall not have declared war against the United States. Otherwise, I suppose there will be no room for a question.

Another inquiry is, whether any further proposals of negotiation can be made with safety; and whether there will be any use or advantage, in Europe or America, by uniting minds more in our favor, by any such measure. In a message to both Houses of Congress, on the 21st day of June last, the President expressed his opinion of the impropriety of sending any ministers to France, without assurances that they shall be received. In this opinion he perseveres. But the question is, whether, in the speech, the President may not say, that in order to keep open the channels of negotiation, it is his intention to nominate a minister to the French republic, who may be ready to embark for France, as soon as he, or the President, shall receive from the Directory satisfactory assurances that he shall be received and entitled to all the prerogatives and privileges of the general law of nations, and that a minister of equal rank and powers shall be appointed and commissioned to treat with him. If any measure of this kind should be thought admissible, who shall be the man? Patrick Henry? Judge Patterson? Mr. Senator Ross? Mr. Senator Stockton? I mention these, because, while they are staunch Americans, they have not been marked or obnoxious to the French. No public speeches have been printed of theirs, which have been pointed against the French. Or shall we fix upon a man without regard to this, as Bayard, of Delaware, Harper, Sitgreaves, &c., or shall we fix upon one in Europe, as King, Smith, or Murray?[1]

[1] This letter is of great importance, as showing not only the state of Mr.

Another thing I wish to be considered is, whether it will not be necessary to lay before Congress all the papers sent from Mr. Gerry by Mr. Humphreys; and, if it will, I pray you to have copies of them made for both Houses.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Cambridge, 20 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have the honor to inform you, that there has lately been published, in the Boston gazettes, a letter signed "Timothy Pickering," addressed to P. Johnson, Esq., of Prince Edward county, Virginia, dated the 29th of September last, wherein Mr. Pickering, speaking of the despatches of the envoys, says that "M. Talleyrand affects an utter ignorance of the persons, designated in the despatches by the letters W, X, Y, and Z; and in his letter of May 30th, with solemn grimace, requests Mr. Gerry immediately to communicate to him the names for which those letters stand. And Mr. Gerry, although he knew that Talleyrand was much better acquainted with X, Y, and Z, than he was himself, having complied with this insulting

Adams's mind at this time, upon the most disputed question during his administration, but the early knowledge of it on the part of his cabinet officers, who yet complained of his sudden determination in the nomination of Mr. Murray, four months later. It now seems to explain the cause of the measures of counteraction to which they resorted. Instead of sending any answer, or entering into a discussion of the questions involved, a consultation was had, denominated by Mr. Jefferson "a military conclave," from the presence of some of the general officers then assembled at Philadelphia, and especially of Mr. Hamilton, at which a draught of a message was prepared, obviously designed to preclude the President's action upon the suggestions herein contained. This draught was probably made by Mr. Wolcott under the dictation of Mr. Hamilton, and it is conceded by Mr. Gibbs to have been intended to "leave no loophole for retreat." Yet Mr. Hamilton must at the time have had in his hands Rufus King's private letter to him, from London, assuring him "that there would be no war," and that France would propose to renew negotiations. The failure of this attempt to coerce the President, his substitution of a sentiment directly the opposite of the one submitted to him for adoption, and the subsequent appeal to the federal members of Congress to force the party into a declaration of war, which likewise failed, are treated more at large in another part of this work. Randolph's *Jefferson*, vol. iii. p. 186. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 186 – 7. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 359. The reader must contrast the original passage in Mr. Wolcott's draught, as it is found printed in italics in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. p. 171, with the substituted paragraph, and also with the paragraph in the above letter on the same subject, in order fully to perceive the purpose of its framers.

request, M. Talleyrand makes a formal record of their names," &c.

Had Mr. Pickering waited until my return, he would, I presume, have been convinced, by my despatches, of the impropriety of forming his judgment by the representations *only* of M. Talleyrand, who had, by the publication of the despatches of the envoys, become my antagonist. He would have seen that I could not with propriety have refused a compliance with that insulting request, as he styled it; that the publication of the despatches of the envoys had rendered me peculiarly obnoxious to the minister because by my communications only it appeared, that he had had connection with the intriguers; that the French government, who were supposed to be implicated in this affair, had a right to demand of me, through their minister, such information as might be necessary to confirm his report respecting the names of the intriguers; and that, in such a critical state, to have refused the information, to have thus provoked the French government, and to have furnished it with a pretext for indignant measures against myself, would have been a rash and unwarrantable act. Mr. Pickering was not well informed when he asserted that the despatches of the envoys were not published in France; for they were published in some of the Northern departments of the republic. Neither is he warranted in his assertion, that "I knew that Talleyrand was much better acquainted with X, Y, and Z, than I was myself." I presumed that this was the case with respect to Y; but Z I had known in the United States when driven from St. Domingo; and I knew nothing more of his connection, or of X's, with M. Talleyrand, than what has been communicated to the public.

Mr. Pickering, proceeding, states that there is "one other important fact" relative to this business, not mentioned in the despatches from the envoys, which ought to be universally known, and of the truth of which he has incontrovertible evidence. It is this; "the company at the *private* dinner to which Mr. Gerry was invited by M. Talleyrand, consisted of X, Y, and Z. After rising from table, X and Y renewed to Mr. Gerry in the *room*, and in the *presence* (though perhaps not in the hearing) of Talleyrand, the *money propositions* which the envoys had before rejected," &c.

This "important fact," notwithstanding the "incontrovertible

evidence," which Mr. Pickering speaks of, *never existed.* I dined with M. Talleyrand but twice, once at his table and once at my own, whilst the other envoys were in Paris. X, Y, and Z, were at his table, and Y and Z at mine, with fifteen or twenty other persons, at each dinner. How, then, it can be said that "I was invited by M. Talleyrand at a private dinner," and that "the company consisted of X, Y, and Z," I am yet to learn. The proposition, which X and Y then made, was, I think, relative to the loan only. Be this as it may, it was instantly rejected by my declaring that we had neither power nor funds for the purpose. This was subsequent to the dates of the letters of the envoys, Nos. 1 and 2, in which we had *detailed* our conferences with X and Y on the money propositions. Nevertheless, had the envoys supposed this fact necessary to have been added to our voluminous communications on the same subject, I was ready to adopt the measure, and to have made it as "universally known" as the latter.

I shall make, Sir, no further comments on the letter referred to, because I am persuaded that your Excellency will be convinced of the errors pointed out, and will be disposed, in the most public and prompt manner, to do me justice; and because I presume that Mr. Pickering will readily promote the same measure.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 22 October, 1798.

SIR, — I received, on Saturday, your favor of the 15th. When I dated the commissions of the Major-Generals on the same day, I had made up my mind, that if an acquiescence, by amicable agreement, in the opinion of General Washington should not take place, I would confirm his judgment, whatever it might be.

If I could have been at Philadelphia to receive him, I should have invited General Washington to that city long ago. I cannot go to that city, nor to Trenton, very soon.[1] Mrs. Adams's

[1] Mr. McHenry in his letter had urged the President to come to the seat of government for the purpose of facilitating the organization of the new military forces.

health is so low, and her life so precarious, that it will be impossible for me to force myself away from her till the last moment. The last has been the most gloomy summer of my life, and the prospect of the winter is more dismal still; for if I should not have a more melancholy separation to endure before I set out for the southward, I must then leave my family here, and pass a dreary winter alone at the seat of government. At all events, however, I must be at the opening of Congress, or give up. Nothing shall wait for me, that you send me here. If you and the Generals judge it necessary to appoint the officers of battalions before we can have an opportunity to nominate them to the Senate, you may fill up the commissions with the blanks you have, or, if you have not enough, send new ones by the post, as is every day done from the offices of State, Treasury, and of the Navy, and I will sign them without loss of time.

As to recruiting service, I wonder whether there has been any enthusiasm which would induce men of common sense to enlist for five dollars a month, who could have fifteen, when they pleased, by sea, or for common work at land.

I have no attachment to one, more than another, of the candidates for appointments. The general officers are so well acquainted with the characters, that I shall have no hesitation to appoint such as you and they recommend. It may be well, however, to let the Secretaries of State, Treasury, and Navy, and the Attorney-General, if convenient, see the list, that, if they have any objection, they may mention it, or if any idea to suggest, they may propose it.

There has been no national plan, that I have seen, as yet formed for the maintenance of the army. One thing I know, that regiments are costly articles everywhere, and more so in this country than any other under the sun. If this nation sees a great army to maintain, without an enemy to fight, there may arise an enthusiasm that seems to be little foreseen. At present there is no more prospect of seeing a French army here, than there is in Heaven.[1] I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] At this day, it seems to be matter of astonishment that the truth of this proposition should not have been universally recognized. It is difficult to resist the belief that an organization was by some contemplated, as Mr. Adams described it, "to appoint a General over the President." Sedgwick to Hamilton. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 394.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 26 October, 1798.

The inclosed letter to me from Mr. Gerry[1] I received last night, and pray you to have it inserted in a public print. It will satisfy him, and do no harm to any one. It explains some circumstances advantageously. He came to me upon the publication of your answer to the address, and seemed uneasy at some expressions in it. I read him the extract of General Marshall's letter to you, which was in the words you have employed. He gave me the same explanations as are contained in this letter. I advised him to put them on paper in the form of a letter to you, or, if he chose it, to me, and I would transmit it to you.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Quincy, 29 October, 1798.

Sir, — I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 20th, and am glad to have the opportunity of consenting to the appointment of officers who will do so much credit in their stations to the service, as I believe Captain Church and Lieutenant Hamilton will do in theirs.

I have received from Hauteval a packet of addresses, one of which is inclosed. I do not think them of consequence enough to suppress them.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 29 October, 1798.

I have received your favor of October 18th, and pray you, when you see General Pinckney, to congratulate him for me on his arrival; but I would not wish him to think of a journey here to see me. I shall see him, I hope, ere long, at Trenton or Philadelphia.

The two letters returned in yours are important. The first

[1] See page 610.

has made a great impression on me.[1] Inclosed is another letter, which I pray you to decipher and return as soon as possible. But do not write me any letter to arrive in Quincy or Boston after the 10th of November.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 2 November, 1798.

Sir, — Yesterday Mr. Woodward came up and presented me with the inclosed memorial, which he says was presented by Dr. Logan to the French minister, and was procured for him by Mr. Richard Codman. Mr. Woodward told me that Dr. Logan told him that three persons only knew of his intentions to visit France, and these three were Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Genet, and Mr. Letombe; that Genet's letters procured him his passport for Paris. Mr. Woodward is of opinion that Genet is still the principal conductor, under hand, of all the French affairs in this country. I send the papers and these particulars to you, that you and the other heads of department may make your reflections upon them.

The power of declaring war, by the French Constitution, is vested in the two councils. Although the Directory have made war upon Switzerland, Rome, and other powers, without any declaration by the councils, yet they may have reasons of prudence to restrain them towards the United States. And complaisant as the councils may be supposed to be to the Directory, it may not be so easy to obtain from them a declaration of war against us.

The object of Logan in his unauthorized embassy seems to have been, to do or obtain something which might give opportunity for the "true American character to blaze forth in the approaching elections." Is this constitutional, for a party of opposition to send embassies to foreign nations to obtain their interference in elections? Logan told Woodward that all was going very well in America, the towns about Boston were all petitioning against arming, when the despatches arrived and

[1] This is the first of the important private letters of Mr. Vans Murray, which, for the sake of clearly showing the nature of the impressions gradually made upon Mr. Adams's mind, have been placed together in the appendix to this volume. See Appendix A. No. 1 and No. 2.

ruined all, to such a degree that a Jacobin was become infinitely more odious than ever a Tory had been in the revolutionary war.[1]

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

Trenton, 5 November, 1798.

Sir, — I have been honored with your letter of the 26th ultimo, inclosing Mr. Gerry's of the 20th. I am sorry that I cannot comply with your proposition "to have it inserted in a public print;" for I must then subjoin such remarks as will expose his quibbles and further wound his feelings. I shall go further, and display not his pusillanimity, weakness, and meanness alone, but his *duplicity* and *treachery*. You will start at the two last words; I verily believe they are correctly applied, and that the testimonies of General Pinckney and General Marshall (whose veracity will not be questioned) will support the imputation. I verily believe, Sir, that his conduct would warrant his impeachment; and if he should not be impeached, not *his innocence*, but *political expediency* alone, may prevent it. If Mr. Gerry should insist on the publication of his letter, let him publish it himself. I shall then take such notice of it as *truth* and the *honor of my country* require. I am, Sir, &c.

Timothy Pickering.

[1] Dr. Logan's mission to France excited the jealousy of the federal party in a high degree, as an attempt to operate upon the elections of the country through a foreign agency. But for Mr. Jefferson's privity, it is not probable that it would even then have been so unfavorably interpreted. It was the characteristic of that gentleman to give clandestine encouragement to every movement, and to be always surprised at the effect which followed the almost inevitable disclosure of his agency. Yet there is reason to believe that Dr. Logan's representations contributed to soften the temper of the rulers in both countries. General Washington, whose partisan feelings never ran higher than at this time, has given his own account of his interview with Dr. Logan. It makes one of the very few lifelike pictures we have left of him. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. p. 384, note.

Dr. Logan's visit to Mr. Adams took place after the date of this letter. Time has completely vindicated his motives from suspicion. But it has not yet done due honor to his action. He tried a similar experiment many years afterwards in the case of Great Britain, with less success.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 15 December, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I have received your favor of 24th of November. I sent your letter to me, of the 20th of October, from Quincy to the Secretary of State, and requested him to publish it. He has returned it to me, and declines publishing it. I return it to you inclosed, as I think it will be attended with no good effect, if I should publish it. You will judge for yourself whether it is necessary for you to publish it. My opinion and advice and request are that you would not, because things stand at this time well enough. But the publication of that letter may involve controversies that had better remain at rest.

Although I am well satisfied that your conduct was upright and well intended, yet I find that General Marshall has left with Colonel Pickering his journal from day to day, and your conduct, as there represented, will be very unpopular, in several points. Your separate and secret conferences with Talleyrand, your advocating a stipulation for a loan to be paid after the war, will do no good to you or to the public. Pinckney and Marshall will attest to the correctness of the journal, and will be believed. Indeed, I do not know that there is any thing in it that you would deny.

At least, I wish you to wait until you see the communications I shall make to Congress. I hope all will be still and calm; I should hate to have any dispute excited about what is past.

My compliments to Mrs. Gerry and the little family, and believe me as ever your friend and servant.

John Adams.

TO WILLIAM S. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 19 December, 1798.

Dear Sir, — Before you receive this, you will probably receive a letter from the Secretary of War, informing you that the general officers have proposed either you or Mr. Hammond to be a Lieutenant-Colonel commandant. This event has embarrassed me. I know not what to do. I know not whether the Senate

will not negative the nomination, if I make it, nor whether you will accept the appointment, if they should advise and consent to it.

Upon this occasion I must be plain with you. Your pride and ostentation, which I myself have seen with inexpressible grief for many years, have excited among your neighbors so much envy and resentment, that, if they have to allege against you any instance of dishonorable and dishonest conduct, as it is pretended they have, you may depend upon it, it will never be forgiven or forgotten. He whose vanity has been indulged and displayed to the humiliation and mortification of others, may depend on meeting their revenge whenever they shall find an opportunity for it. They are now taking vengeance on you with a witness.

If I were to nominate you to any thing more than a regiment, according to reports and spirit that prevail, I have no doubt you would be again negatived by the Senate. If I nominate you to a regiment, I still fear it will not pass. It is a great misfortune to the public that the office I hold should be disgraced by a nomination of my son-in-law, which the Senate of the United States think themselves obliged to negative. If the disgrace should be repeated, it will be a serious thing to the public, as well as to me, and you, and our children.

I pray you, then, to write me, without loss of time, whether you wish me to make the nomination, and whether you will accept it, if made and consented to.[1]

My love to my daughter and Miss Caroline.

[1] The publication of this letter is made necessary, in order to explain the course of Mr. Pickering in the case of Colonel Smith. The facts will now be briefly given, with the authorities to sustain every particular.

1. Colonel Smith's military standing throughout the revolutionary war is fully vouched for by General Washington, then Commander-in-chief, and General Lincoln, acting as Secretary of War, in certificates given by them in 1782. See the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, from 1783 to 1789, vol. v. pp. 372 – 373. It is also sustained by General Hamilton. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 431. In the organization of the new army, General Washington placed his name on his own list of officers, as the third of four Brigadiers, and one out of three from whom to select an Adjutant-General. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. p. 264.

2. At the moment when General Washington's list was placed before the President, that is, on the 17th of July, 1798, Mr. Pickering, then acting as Secretary of War, was with him. He heard him decide upon altering it so far as to give Dayton the precedence over Smith as a Brigadier, and to make Smith Adjutant-General. Colonel Smith had served in a similar capacity to the corps of General Lafayette, in 1779. Pickering's *Review*, &c., p. 145.

JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Albany, 3 January, 1799.

Dear Sir, — I this morning laid before the legislature of this State your answer to their address. For the kind and honorable mention made of me in it, be pleased to accept my warmest acknowledgments. To be thus *laudari a viro laudato*, and to receive such spontaneous and decided manifestations of sincere

3. Knowing the President's will, through his confidential relation to him, Mr. Pickering went up *immediately* to the Senate, announced to some of the Senators that such a nomination was about to be sent in, and urged a rejection of it upon grounds stated by himself, and without giving Colonel Smith a chance of a hearing in his defence. Pickering's *Review*, p. 145.

4. On the 18th of July, being the morning of the day the nominations were sent in, Mr. Pickering wrote a confidential letter to General Hamilton, giving all the particulars of the President's action, and, besides expressing his opposition to Colonel Smith, intimated a wish that all the nominations of Brigadiers might be postponed until the autumn, when "a better arrangement might be made." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 327.

5. Colonel Pickering, in another letter, ten days later, admitted that the President knew nothing of the charges against Colonel Smith, and affirmed that he was acting upon a totally mistaken estimate of his military talents. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 330.

Mr. Adams, in writing to his wife on the 31st December, 1798, says; "If Smith has forfeited his honor, I wish some kind friend would have given me the facts and the proof. In such a case I would not nominate him to be a lieutenant. But no such fact or proof has been presented to me."

6. On the 19th of July, the Senate confirmed the entire list of nominations as sent in by the President, excepting that of Colonel Smith, which they rejected on the representations of the President's own cabinet officer, made without his knowledge, and sustained by no evidence. *Journal, Executive Proceedings Senate U. S.* vol. i. p. 293. Pickering's *Review*, p. 146.

7. Colonel Pickering, not content with this success, seems to have pursued his hostility to Colonel Smith down to the moment when his name was proposed to the general officers for the commission of Lieutenant-Colonel. He affirms that they declined to recommend him to the President. The fact is, that they reported him as one of two candidates, in case he could clear himself from the charges made against him. Colonel Smith sent his defence. He was thereupon nominated to the Senate by Mr. Adams, very unwillingly, because he thought the place beneath his deserts, and only after having consulted him, through the above letter, with the view of his declining it. The opposition of Colonel Pickering was still carried on, but the Senate this time received Colonel Smith's defence, and they confirmed the nomination without a division. Pickering's *Review*, p. 148. J. A. to his wife. Ms. 31 Dec. 1798. *Journal, Executive Proceedings Senate U. S.* vol. i. p. 303.

It is believed that no similar instance of disclosure of and interference with the action of the President, by a cabinet officer in his confidence, has ever occurred under the present form of government. It is due to Mr. Pickering to add that, without appearing to have carefully analyzed the moral objections to his course of proceeding, he expressed serious misgivings at one time about its propriety. See his letter to J. Jay. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 330.

and cordial esteem and friendship, are events too interesting and pleasing not to excite correspondent emotions.

Our affairs in relation to France are by too many thought to have assumed a less menacing aspect. Such and similar errors are and will be encouraged. When the Directory refused to receive, and ungraciously dismissed General Pinckney, that singular measure, viewed in all its relations, led me to apprehend that the continuance of existing differences, by putting them in capacity to elect war or peace with us, according to future circumstances, was deemed necessary to some of their meditated plans. They must have foreseen that improper conduct towards our minister would impair their interest in the affections of this country; and therefore I conclude that the object for which it was done, must in their opinion have been of more importance than that sacrifice.

I presume that the rejection of our three envoys is imputable to the same motives; and that the unexpected degree of indignation and irritation which it produced, induced the Directory to endeavor to moderate and restrain our resentments by pacific and delusory professions, in order still to keep things in a state of perplexing uncertainty.

Various circumstances and considerations incline me to think it not improbable that their views of domination comprehend all America, both *north* and *south;* and that they wish to place the United States in a situation favorable and auxiliary to those views. Considering the state of Spain and even of Portugal, I ascribe the forbearance of France, in not attempting to conquer and disorganize them, to the obvious difficulty of embracing their American territories, until she shall, by war or by peace, have withdrawn the British fleets from the ocean, and, if possible, have rendered the United States compliant.

From the representations of their agents and partisans in this country, the Directory have doubtless entertained too sanguine expectations; and from the firmness of our government and the general declarations of our people, they may perceive that their calculations have not been accurate. I nevertheless think it probable that they will continue to be in many respects deceived, and that their efforts to deceive and seduce will continue unremitted. While they persist in multiplying difficulties and complaints and aggressions, and in repelling the negotiations

necessary to settle differences amicably, it is impossible that their real designs can be otherwise than hostile.

You are called, my dear Sir, to the government of this nation at a time when our peculiar circumstances and dangers demand the combined efforts of great talents, great fortitude, and great prudence. Your measures have hitherto afforded matter for brilliant pages in our history, and they have inspired a confidence which will greatly facilitate the operation and success of your future ones. With great and sincere respect, esteem, and affectionate regard, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

15 January, 1799.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of State to prepare the draught of a project of a treaty and a consular convention, such as in his opinion might at this day be acceded to by the United States, if proposed by France. It is his desire that the Secretary of State would avail himself of the advice and assistance of all the heads of department in the formation of this composition, to be completed as soon as the pressure of other business of more immediate necessity will permit. The necessity of inviolable confidence will be obvious.[1]

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

18 January, 1799.

SIR, — On examining the alterations you have directed in the report on Mr. Gerry's communications, one appears to me to

[1] This is dated more than a month before the nomination of Mr. Murray. It followed the refusal to cut off, in the message to Congress, all further opening for negotiation, as proposed by the cabinet in November preceding; and the letter of the 20th October, before that, suggesting the names of individuals who might in certain contingencies be nominated to negotiate. See page 609. Yet the cabinet officers professed complete surprise when Mr. Murray was nominated! The truth is, that the struggle of the three cabinet officers had been all the while, by every means, to prevent that act, and their disappointment at the failure, through the steadiness of Mr. Adams, was in proportion.

leave unfounded and unconnected many of my observations, and on a very important point.

Mr. Gerry, in his letter of October 1st, has expressed an opinion of most mischievous tendency. He says: "Before the arrival of the despatches of the envoys, the minister appeared to me sincere, and anxious to obtain a reconciliation." This strange opinion, so repugnant to the whole tenor of his own communications, will nevertheless be quoted by the enemies of our country, in France as well as America, in proof of the sincerity of the French government; and lead many to propagate the idea that, but for the *imprudent act*, as they will call it, of publishing the despatches, a reconciliation might have taken place. Mr. Gerry's opinion, as above expressed, is also a reflection on the President, on Congress, and on all who had any agency directly or indirectly in causing that publication, as manifesting a want of prudence and foresight, and hazarding a war between the two countries.

Mr. Gerry's opinion is of so pernicious a tendency, I conceived it to be my duty to combat it and demonstrate that it was unfounded; not by an *allusion*, but by a *direct reference* to it. I therefore beg leave to submit this matter once more to your consideration, before the new copy is completed. His feelings and consequence in the community are of no moment in competion with the *public interest;* and but for the latter, I would gladly keep out of sight every thing indicating any error in his proceedings.

The passage in question I have thus expressed in the report: "5. Because Mr. Gerry, after all the demonstrative proofs of which he was possessed to the contrary, says, in his letter of 1st October, 1798: 'Before the arrival of the despatches of the envoys, the minister appeared to me sincere, and anxious to obtain a reconciliation.' This very extraordinary opinion is opposed not only by the whole detail of facts exhibited in the despatches of the envoys, but by Mr. Gerry's own correspondence."

Several pages then follow, contrasting the evidences of Talleyrand's SINCERITY, *before* and *after* the publication of the despatches, and having a direct reference to the passage in question.

The *language* may perhaps be softened; but the *substance*

seems to me very important to retain. It might have this form: "5. Because Mr. Gerry, in his letter of 1st October, 1798, has expressed his opinion, that 'before the arrival of the despatches of the envoys the minister appeared to him sincere, and anxious to obtain a reconciliation;' an opinion which a candid examination of the despatches of the envoys and of Mr. Gerry's own correspondence will show to be erroneous."

The President will see that three motives urge me to submit these thoughts to his attention. One, To counteract a mischievous opinion that has no foundation. 2dly. To vindicate his honor and that of Congress from the imputation of rashness or indiscretion in the publication of the despatches, and 3dly, a desire that the Secretary's report may appear connected, and the train of reasoning through several pages have some relation to their proper object.[1] I am, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

RUFUS KING TO JOHN ADAMS.

London, 26 January, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — Some weeks past, I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 16th of October;[2] the inclosure was immediately forwarded, though, from the obstructions which interrupted the passage to Hamburgh, I fear it was a long time on its way to Berlin.

We are still uncertain what is likely to be the situation of Europe during the approaching summer, and on this topic I can only refer to my despatches to Colonel Pickering. It would be

[1] The following indorsement is in Mr. Adams's handwriting;
Answered orally, 19th, by refusal to comply.
In Colonel Pickering's Review, printed in 1824, he gives what he affirms to be *all* the corrections made by Mr. Adams in his report. That pointed out in this letter is not among them. As no wilful misstatement was probably intended, the inference is that he examined the revised copy, to which he alludes. This is the more likely, as he himself admits that the parts he found "struck out were of much less consequence than at first sight he had supposed." They certainly do not correspond to Mr. Adams's recollections of what they had been, any more than to the tone of his own letter of November 5th, or to his later recollection of Mr. Adams's reply to him at the time, which he has made so emphatic by his mode of printing. "I am not going to send to Congress a philippic against Mr. Gerry." See page 616. Pickering's *Review*, p. 140.

[2] See page 606. Also compare the conclusion of this letter with the two letters of 17th and 23d September, 1798, addressed by the same hand to Mr. Hamilton. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 356 – 359.

hardly decent to express what I think of the weakness, corruption, and indecision of most of the continental governments. The aristocracies are as unwise and as base as their princes, and if Europe shall be rescued from the barbarism with which philosophy is about to overwhelm it, it will be effected by the moderation and the virtues of the people, who, in Spain, Italy, and throughout Germany, are less guilty, and more meritorious, than their magistrates and rulers. This is a melancholy prospect, and one that may appall, though it ought not to discourage, the boldest minds. The firmness, courage, and the resources of England, joined to the docility of the people, and to the wonderful ease with which the laws are adapted to the new and dangerous condition of surrounding circumstances, are the highest eulogium of its constitution, afford a rational hope of ultimate security, and confirm what has been so well proved in the best work that has been written upon the intricate subject of government. Amidst this mighty storm, it is my greatest pleasure, and the source of the most gratifying pride, to mark the increasing attention with which Europe continues to observe and to applaud the able and dignified administration of the American government, which, in its open and manly proceedings towards France, has not only done much for its own security, but more for that of Europe than many portions of it have had the courage to do themselves. This homage is involuntary; for everywhere throughout Europe, strong, though ill-founded, prejudices existed against us and our institutions.

With unfeigned respect and attachment, I am, &c.

RUFUS KING.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 19 February, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — Although I received the honor of your letter of the 1st of this month,[1] in its season, I determined to postpone my answer to it till I had deliberated on it, and the letter from Barlow, inclosed in it, as well as a multitude of other letters and documents, official and inofficial, which relate to the same subject, and determined what part to act.

I yesterday determined to nominate Mr. Murray to be minis-

[1] See this letter in Sparks's *Washington's Writings*, vol. xi. p. 398.

ter plenipotentiary to the French republic. This I ventured to do upon the strength of a letter from Talleyrand himself, giving declarations, in the name of his government, that any minister plenipotentiary from the United States shall be received according to the condition at the close of my message to Congress, of the 21st of June last. As there may be some reserves for chicane, however, Murray is not to remove from his station at the Hague until he shall have received formal assurances that he shall be received and treated in character.

Barlow's letter had, I assure you, very little weight in determining me to this measure. I shall make few observations upon it. But, in my opinion, it is not often that we meet with a composition which betrays so many and so unequivocal symptoms of blackness of heart. The wretch has destroyed his own character to such a degree, that I think it would be derogatory to yours to give any answer at all to his letter. Tom Paine is not a more worthless fellow. The infamous threat which he has debased himself to transmit to his country to intimidate you and your country, "that certain conduct will be followed by war, and that it will be a war of the most terrible and vindictive kind," ought to be answered by a Mohawk. If I had an Indian chief that I could converse with freely, I would ask him what answer he would give to such a gasconade. I fancy he would answer that he would, if they began their cruelties, cut up every Frenchman joint by joint, roast him by a fire, pinch off his flesh with hot pincers, &c. I blush to think that such ideas should be started in this age.[1]

Tranquillity upon just and honorable terms, is undoubtedly the ardent desire of the friends of this country, and I wish the

[1] There is a good deal of partisan harshness in this condemnation. But Mr. Barlow, however sincere his motives, had been very far from judicious in his mode of attempting to bring round a reconciliation between the two countries. He had written to his brother-in-law, Mr. Baldwin, in March, that "the election of Adams produced the order of the 2d of March, which was meant to be little short of a declaration of war," thus making the President responsible for all the losses which took place under that decree, merely because he had been selected by the people, acting in their own legitimate sphere, for the chief executive office. And in a later letter of the 26th July to James Watson, which had been submitted to the President, even in stating the withdrawal by the French government of their most offensive acts, he had urged peace measures, not on their own merits, but under the menace, that "a refusal would be considered as a declaration of war, and it would be a war of the most terrible and vindictive kind." These were not of the class of arguments likely to conciliate Mr. Adams. Wait's *State Papers*, vol. iv. p. 269. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 112.

babyish and womanly blubbering for peace may not necessitate the conclusion of a treaty that will not be just nor very honorable. I do not intend, however, that they shall. There is not much sincerity in the cant about peace; those who snivel for it now, were hot for war against Britain a few months ago, and would be now, if they saw a chance. In elective governments, peace or war are alike embraced by parties, when they think they can employ either for electioneering purposes.[1]

With great respect and regard to you and your good lady, and late Miss Custis, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

HENRY KNOX TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Secret and confidential.)

Boston, 5 March, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR — Although I have often entertained the intention of writing to you, yet as I had nothing more to communicate than assurances of my sincere attachment, and the warm approbation which appeared to possess the best mind of the great majority of the people, I could not bring myself to intrude upon time so precious to your country.

But when your recent nominations to France seem for a moment to have divided, in a degree, the federal opinions, and when sentiments are uttered by some, subversive of the confidence which ought to be placed in our President, I can no longer be silent.

I have no doubt (uninformed as the public are) that their entire reliance on your superior knowledge of the state of Europe, and wisdom to embrace every proper occasion, will be perfectly satisfactory to ninety-nine persons out of a hundred, who are attached to the happiness, glory, and freedom of their country. But the hundredth part, or rather certain persons who have an influence over the mind of that part, and who affect to suggest to, correspond with, and even to influence the conduct of certain characters in the executive departments, loudly fault the measure of the nomination. They say the most confidential

[1] At about this same time, Mr. Pickering was transmitting to General Washington information that "the President was suffering the torments of the damned, at the consequences of his nomination." The writer's name is suppressed, but the context reveals it. Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Fed. Adm.* vol. ii. p. 208.

persons in the executive departments, and in the legislature, were not consulted, and therefore the propriety of the measure may be questioned, and they doubtless derive their information from the said persons, who are in Philadelphia. The persons here, who are mostly dissatisfied, are the same (styling themselves federalists) who in the first instance expressed themselves with equal virulence against the British treaty. They have had some influence, but in the present case will find it more limited than formerly. Your knowledge of characters will readily suggest who they are. The main object in writing this letter is to assure you, with all possible sincerity, of my perfect conviction that the great body of the federal interest, confide implicitly in your knowledge and virtue; that those qualities are fully adequate to the important existing crisis; and that in every division of opinion they will adhere and cling to you in preference to all others.

In addition to this general opinion, I may with humility say, that the measure itself, for many obvious reasons, is one of the most dignified, decisive, and beneficial ever adopted by the Chief Magistrate of any nation, soaring above all prejudice, and regarding the happiness of the nation as the primary object of his administration, and in the pursuit of which he nobly hazards his reputation, until the mists of ignorance or party shall subside. I am, with sincere respect, &c.

HENRY KNOX.

POINTS

which, on the 11th of March, 1799, received the President's assent, as *ultimata.*

1. That France should stipulate to indemnify the citizens of the United States for the spoliations committed on their commerce by the armed vessels and citizens of France, and by the adjudication of her courts in prize causes.

2. That as the vessels of the United States were not bound by treaty to have on board what the French call a *rôle d'équipage*, all captures and condemnations of American vessels and property for want of a *rôle d'équipage*, be considered as unlawful and null; and that in submitting to a board of commissioners, who may be appointed to adjust mutual claims, all those arising from captures and condemnations for want of the *rôle*

d'équipage, be expressly excepted, as not admitting of any dispute, but for which compensation shall be made by France, the only question concerning them being the *amount of the damages* sustained by American citizens, to be ascertained in the manner to be agreed on.

3. That the United States will not stipulate to guarantee any part of the dominions of France.

C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 14 March, 1799.

Dear Sir — The inclosed from my friend Marshall, on Wednesday last was received by me, and it is with no small pleasure I find his opinion correspondent with my own respecting the appointment of Murray. You will perceive from the date, that the subsequent modification of the embassy was not known to him when he wrote. His letter being entirely of a private nature, I should not have sent it to you, but that I presume it will afford you satisfaction to know that a measure which excited so much agitation here, has met the approbation of so good a judge as Mr. Marshall.[1]

Nothing new has been heard concerning the insurgents since you left the city. The report of the marshal agrees substantially

[1] Mr. Marshall's letter was returned. The act to which it alludes, saved the neutral policy of the country. And this evidence, as well as General Knox's letter, shows that the sentiment of disapprobation was not even at the time quite so general among the federalists as Mr. Pickering assumes it in his confidential disclosure to Mr. Hamilton to have been. See *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 398. Mr. Jay's tone and manner of treating the subject, even with the half light in which he saw it, contrast singularly with those of Mr. Pickering and Mr. Sedgwick. See Jay's *Life of Jay*, vol. ii. p. 288, 296.

Patrick Henry's letter to Mr. Pickering, 16th April, declining his appointment, speaks for itself.

Mr. Higginson also betrays his uneasiness at the approbation of the measure given by others whom he does not name, though General Lincoln is evidently one of them. He laments that "no use will be made of the powers given to the President by the alien and sedition acts, nor will the authority to raise an army, to organize and officer it, be exercised." S. Higginson to O. Wolcott, Gibbs's *Mem. of the Fed. Adm.* vol. ii. p. 230.

Lastly, General Lafayette, in a letter adressed to Mr. McHenry on the 18th of April, which has not been printed, says,

"I must express the happiness I have felt in hearing that plenipotentiary ministers are going from the United States, to bring about a reconciliation with France. I am persuaded, *as I have formerly written*, that the French government are in earnest."

with the letters and affidavit which were shown to you by the Secretary of State on Monday evening.

Wishing you a safe journey, &c.

CHARLES LEE.

TO C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

(Private.)

Quincy, 29 March, 1799.

SIR, — Esteeming very highly the opinion and character of your friend General Marshall, I thank you for inclosing his letter of the 3d of March in yours of the 14th, which I have received.

The nomination of Murray has had one good effect, at least. It has shown to every observing and thinking man the real strength or weakness of the Constitution, and where one part of that weakness resides. It has also produced a display of the real spirit of the parties in this country, and the objects they have in view. To me, it has laid open characters. Some of these will do well to study a little more maturely the spirit of their stations. But vanity has no limits; arrogance shall be made to feel a curb. If any one entertains the idea, that, because I am a President of three votes only, I am in the power of a party, they shall find that I am no more so than the Constitution forces upon me. If combinations of senators, generals, and heads of department shall be formed, such as I cannot resist, and measures are demanded of me that I cannot adopt, my remedy is plain and certain. I will try my own strength at resistance first, however. This is free, and *entre nous*.

TO J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 29 March, 1799.

SIR, — I have received, in your favor of the 16th, Major General Pinckney's list, arranged in concert with Governor Davie. This list has my approbation, and you may announce as soon as possible to the persons their appointments.

I expect that all the vacancies in the army be first communicated to me, and the candidates, with their recommendations, be transmitted to me, before commissions are sent them, or appointments announced to them.

Inclosed is a letter from Benjamin Beale, Jr., which I request you to consider. He cannot accept a lieutenancy, and I cannot blame him. His age, education, travels, manners, and irreproachable character merit a captaincy, if any one is vacant.

Mr. Hastings has been with me. I wish you to examine his recommendations, and weigh his pretensions. He is a warlike-looking officer, and served the whole revolutionary war.

Major Lillie also has been here. His merits must be attended to. There is also a Mr. Burbeck, who must be provided for in the artillery. He has talents, and experience which no other man in the United States possesses, in compositions which are important in that line of service. A soldier from his birth, he shall be so till his death, if it depends on, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. I return General Pinckney's letter and list. I desire, too, that Mr. Barron's commission as captain of artillery be sent him immediately. The New England officers, I am told, are impatient for their commissions. I desire that all the commissions may be sent to the officers throughout the States, without loss of time.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 7 April, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 28th ultimo, and have signed the commission to Lieutenant Haswell, and sent it on with the letter to Mr. J. C. Jones.

I return you the copies of Captain Truxtun's correspondence with General Desfourneaux, which is conducted on our part with dignity and propriety; excepting perhaps that the respect to French property on board neutral vessels, and to unarmed French vessels, might as well have been concealed.

I thank you for your comfortable opinion that the insurrec-

tion in Northampton will be suppressed without bloodshed. No intelligence could be so agreeable to me.[1]

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 13 April, 1799.

I regret that I cannot have an opportunity of receiving General Maitland and Colonel Grant, and conversing with them on several subjects of importance.[2] They will, I hope and presume, communicate to you all that will be necessary for us to know relative to a certain topic; but I wish to know their sentiments concerning Surinam, Curaçao, &c., and the neutral ports that harbor privateers. Cayenne, too, and even Cuba, are subjects of speculation in certain cases that are very supposable.

I hope Mr. King's public despatches to you were written in better spirits than his private letter to me. You will please to return it to me. Mr. King was, you know, at times a little subject to croaking. I fear, however, in this case he has too much reason. The people in Europe see little difference between the new and the old state of things. The highest and the lowest of mankind are desperately corrupt and wicked, and the middling people are almost destroyed.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 April, 1799.

Sir, — Last night I received your favor of the 5th. The proceedings detailed in it, appear to have been well considered and prudently pursued. But the sordid spirit which produced this as well as the former insurrection in Pennsylvania, and which has given so much trouble to the government, anxiety to the nation, and burden on the treasury, ought to excite more gene-

[1] Mr. Stoddert's letter concluded thus:

"The city troops of horse marched towards Northampton, on Thursday last. We hear nothing to lead to an opinion that there will be any opposition."

[2] They arrived in a sloop of war from England. Their business respected St. Domingo, the unsettled condition of which had excited great feeling both in Great Britain and the United States, and led to much negotiation between them.

ral indignation than it has done. I return all the papers, and pray you to keep me informed of the progress of the business.[1]

Inclosed is a letter from Major Badlam and Mr. H. G. Otis, recommending Mr. Benjamin Bass Leeds to be a lieutenant, for which I believe he is well qualified.

I wish that a plan may be considered for numbering the regiments and arranging the rank of the lieutenant-colonels commandants, and sent to me for my consideration. I think the best way will be to determine the rank of the lieutenant-colonels, and number the regiments at first according to the number which designates the rank of their commanding officer. This will be a good precedent to get rid of the practice, which has too long prevailed, of beginning at one extremity of the Union and proceeding to the other.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 16 April, 1799.

Sir, — I received yesterday your favor of the 8th. If there is no room for Mr. Hastings as a Major, which I believe there is not, you may consider whether there is place for him as a Captain. If there are not candidates of superior claims, he may be offered a captaincy, and if he declines that, another may be appointed.

It is not upon the act of the 3d of March ultimo, that I ground the claim of an authority to appoint the officers in question, but upon the Constitution itself.[2] Whenever there is an office that is not full, there is a vacancy, as I have ever understood the Constitution. To suppose that the President has power to appoint judges and ambassadors, in the recess of the Senate, and not officers of the army, is to me a distinction without a difference, and a Constitution not founded in law or sense, and

[1] Mr. McHenry had written,

"Finding that the two companies of horse, whose services had been relied upon, could turn out about sixty men only, and that the opposition in Northampton, &c., had assumed a more threatening aspect, I conceived it necessary to submit to the heads of department and Attorney-General, the expediency of my calling upon the Governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, to hold in readiness to march against the insurgents a respectable body of militia."

[2] Mr. McHenry had expressed a doubt whether, under the act referred to, the President had power to do more than fill vacancies in the army and navy, which had happened during that session of the Senate. See the issue in the note to the letter of 16 May, p. 647.

very embarrassing to the public service. All such appointments, to be sure, must be nominated to the Senate at their next session, and subject to their ultimate decision. I have no doubt that it is my right and my duty to make the provisional appointments.

Major Lillie has made me a visit, and I was well pleased with his appearance and conversation. He did not appear to me to be an altered man. I learn from others that he has been, like many worthy men, extremely unfortunate in trade, and his misfortunes have sometimes affected his spirits; but an appointment in the army, upon which his heart is set, it is believed by Colonel Rice, will restore him completely to himself. There is some weight, however, in your objection, that two majors are more than the proportion of one State. With a view to this objection, I wish to be informed of the candidates for his office from other States.

I wish to know whether the Jonathan Williams, you mention, is the gentleman who lived in France when I was there, and now in Macpherson's house on the Schuylkill. If it is the same, although I have not known much of his military character, his other qualifications are respectable.

Perkins's lieutenancy for Burbeck, I presume, was on the supposition that himself should be captain, and both stationary for life on the castle. By all that I can learn, Burbeck is well qualified for a captaincy, and has merited it, if very long services without reproach are merit.

It is my intention that all the commissions shall be dated on the same day, and that neither the officers from the Carolinas and Georgia, nor any other officers, shall lose any advantage in rank, by the circumstance of others receiving their commissions sooner. I do not intend, however, that any regulation of rank shall be made, until it has been laid before me. Let especial care be taken that no directions concerning rank be given out by general officers, until I shall have an opportunity to consider and approve them.

I congratulate you on General Macpherson's good conduct and success. I have the honor, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

Inclosed is a letter from Oliver Whipple, requesting to be a Colonel, which you will please to note among the applications.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 17 April, 1799.

Sir, — I received yesterday your favor of the 8th with Mr. King's letters of the 10th and 16th of January, with the inclosure in the former.

These papers I have read with more than common interest and anxiety; and, however sanguine I may be in my disposition, or prone to determine my judgment on the first view of a subject, in this case I must own myself puzzled and in doubt. The whole affair leads to the independence of the West India Islands; and although I may be mistaken, it appears to me that independence is the worst and most dangerous condition they can be in, for the United States. They would be less dangerous under the government of England, France, Spain, or Holland all together, and least of all under the same powers in parcels or divisions, as they are now. This opinion, however, is liable to so much uncertainty, that no great dependence can be placed upon it.[1]

Upon the projects proposed by the British ministry, a great number of questions arise.[2] Will not the projected, partial, limited, and restrained independence of St. Domingo, excite alarms and jealousies in Spain and Holland, such as will attach them and subject them entirely to France; and in Denmark and Sweden, so as to make them more timid, if not more complaisant to France? Will it not involve us in a more inveterate and durable hostility with France, Spain, and Holland, and subject us more to the policy of Britain than will be consistent with our interest or honor? These questions may all be useless, because the independence of St. Domingo, and consequently of all the other islands in the West Indies, and of the Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese possessions on the continent,

[1] Mr. King's letters give an interesting account of his conferences, first with Lord Grenville, and afterwards with the same person, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Dundas, upon the difficulties and dangers growing out of the revolution of St. Domingo, and the decision of the British government to send General Maitland and Colonel Grant to negotiate with General Toussaint.

[2] The main feature of these projects was to agree to one port, viz. Port-au-Prince, as the sole port of entry for the trade of Great Britain and the United States, to be placed within the control of a joint commercial company, formed by the two governments.

may be brought about without our interference, and indeed in opposition to all we can do to prevent it.

The project of a joint company is certainly liable to all the objections which occurred to Mr. King, and although the English government would meet with no difficulty, we should certainly find it very difficult to manage.

My own ideas are these. 1st. That it would be most prudent for us to have nothing to do in the business. 2d. That if we should meddle, we had better leave the independence of the island complete and total, in commerce as well as legislation, to the people who assert it, the inhabitants of the island. 3d. That if this is not the sense of the English, we had better leave the whole management of the affair to them. 4th. That if they think fit, they may stipulate that we shall have a right to accede to the treaty they make, when we can, within a certain period of one, two, or three years. 5th. That we should accede to it, provided the Senate advise and consent, as soon as it shall be determined that no negotiation with France is likely to take place with effect. 6th. That we remain faithful to our promise, to open our commerce with the island as soon as privateering shall cease. 7th. Although these are my prevailing opinions and inclinations, I am by no means fixed in them or bigoted to them. 8th. I wish you to consult the heads of department upon all these points, and if any other principles are more agreeable to them and you, I shall be disposed to concur in any rational expedient, which can be reconciled to justice and sound policy, which may be concerted with Mr. Liston.[1]

[1] Mr. Liston was vested with full powers to concert with the government of the United States the arrangements which might be mutually advantageous. This joint action, proposed by Great Britain in the affairs of St. Domingo, seems at one time to have seriously threatened the dangers to the neutrality of the United States pointed out in the above letter. On the 9th of February, Mr. Pickering had written to Mr. Hamilton for instructions what to do, but, his letter not having been published, its substance can only be gathered by inference from the reply. Whilst Mr. Hamilton promises a fuller answer the next day, he designates the policy to be pursued towards the revolutionary chief, Toussaint, to be; "No committal on the independence of St. Domingo, no guaranty, no formal treaty — *nothing that can rise up in judgment.* It will be enough to let Toussaint be assured verbally, but explicitly, that upon his declaration of independence a commercial intercourse will be opened, &c." On the 20th of February, Mr. Pickering repeats his request for advice, as he is about to draft instructions to the Consul-General, Dr. Stevens, the brother-in-law of Mr. Hamilton, just appointed to go to St. Domingo. It does not appear that he ever received any answer. This may have been owing to the decision respecting Mr. Murray, which dissipated all prospect of executing through the President

TO BENJAMIN ADAMS.

Quincy, 22 April, 1799.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 15th. Our kinsman must apply to the senators and representatives of his own State for recommendations. You know it is impossible for me to appoint my own relations to any thing, without drawing forth a torrent of obloquy. If I were to nominate him without previous recommendations from the senators and representatives from your State, the Senate would probably negative him. I must, moreover, be informed what office he wishes or expects, and is fit for. I do not appoint officers because they want bread.

The Samuel Adams appointed a custom-house officer, was named by the senators and representatives of New Hampshire. I know him not.[1]

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 22 April, 1799.

Sir, — I return you the correspondence between Truxtun and Desfourneaux, inclosed in yours of the 11th, which I received on the 20th. I wish all the other officers had as much zeal as Truxtun. What has become of them? We hear nothing of any but Decatur, Truxtun, and Murray.

If you correct Truxtun's ardor a little, as you ought to do, I pray you to do it very gently and with great delicacy. I would not have it damped for the world.

The weather has for three days been so cold as to retard the circulation of the blood.

any of his policy. In a confidential letter, five days later, after lamenting what he calls the fatal nomination of Mr. Murray, Mr. Pickering goes on to say, that "the President will certainly do no act to encourage Toussaint to declare the island independent." Mr. Liston, the British minister, however, had obtained a very different impression of the intentions of the American government, and was privately announcing an opposite system. In the mean time, Mr. Adams seems to have known nothing of these secret consultations. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 395, 398, vol. vii. p. 686, article vi.

[1] It seems that a kinsman, Samuel Adams, of Newington, N. H., had written a letter inquiring whether there had not been some mistake, and *he* was not the person for whom this appointment had been designed. At the bottom of the sheet, Benjamin Adams had added a recommendation of the writer for some other situation, which occasioned the above reply.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 27 April, 1799.

Sir, — I have signed the commission for Lieutenant Parker, which was inclosed in your favor of the 19th, and sent it to him with your letter and its inclosures.

Your other favor of the 19th contains matter of more importance. I own that the navy has not afforded to our commerce that complete protection which might have been expected from it, considering the vast inferiority of all the French force, both of public and private ships, in the West Indies. Although I would never hurt the feelings of officers, or excite questions which might affect their reputations, or move suspicions without necessity, yet I am prepared to agree to your arrangement about Nicholson.[1] I am not yet prepared to say whether Talbot, or Sever, or some other, ought to be appointed to command the Constitution. Talbot, I am told, was not bred a seaman, though an excellent officer. I apprehend that ship wants an officer of complete nautical skill.

URIAH FORREST TO JOHN ADAMS.

Georgetown, 28 April, 1799.

Dear Sir, — I feel how improper it is, in so inconsiderable an individual as I am, to be intruding on your time, much more, obtruding opinions and advice. I shall, however, hazard your censure, and be guilty of the impropriety which stares me in the face.

I feel how much the happiness of this country depends on the confidence the people have in the government, and I feel that yourself must be the rallying point of confidence. The public sentiment is very much against your being so much away from the seat of government, from a conviction that, when you are there, the public vessel will be properly steered; and that these critical times require an experienced pilot. The people elected you to administer the government. They did not elect your officers, nor do they (however much they respect them) think

[1] To superintend the construction of the frigates then building.

them equal to govern, without your presence and control. In a country like ours, when the people get divided into parties, as we have become, there will always be found men on the governing side, not satisfied with their proper share of power, and who, getting yielded to them more than is their due, increase in their own consequence and claims, until they fancy themselves exclusively entitled to direct. Are we free from such characters? Are there not, even in the soundest States in the Union, men (of influence and fair fame, not at all tinctured with jacobinism, but filled with a certain kind of ambition), who believe that with some other person as chief magistrate, they would have more power than with the present? I hope the influence of such men has not reached any of the departments of government. I speak the truth, when I say that your real friends wish you to be with your officers, because the public impression is, that the government will be better conducted.

I have sincerely regretted Mrs. Adams's indisposition, and now as sincerely rejoice to learn that she has recovered. You will not think of bringing her into Philadelphia, though it would give me great pleasure to hear you were about going to take her to some healthy situation in the neighborhood of it. I wish the time had arrived for you to remove here, where I am sure Mrs. Adams would be very much benefited by the healthiness of the situation. I hope you will pardon this liberty; I can have no motive that is personal to myself; I feel as every man ought to feel for the public happiness. I believe that the seeds of more than two parties in this country have been scattered; but I trust they will not sprout. I am sure it is in your power alone to prevent their growth, and I must add, that you owe it to the public to prevent it. In thus adding, I am not unmindful of the great debt which the public owe to you.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

URIAH FORREST.

[1] In this letter, General Forrest spoke the genuine sense of probably not less than five sevenths of the federal party. Mr. Adams's answer scarcely meets the argument. Yet, taking the cabinet as it was, the only effect of a change of practice must have been to hasten its dissolution, without giving time to establish a better one in the public confidence, before the end of his term.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 1 May, 1799.

Sir, — I received your favor of the 23d, and have read all the papers inclosed with attention and much satisfaction. With the No. 3, "Observations," &c., I was particularly pleased.[1]

I can see no rational objection to any of the seven articles ultimately signed by all the heads of department, unless it be the 6th.[2]

When I first read this, I was apprehensive that some embarrassment might soon arise in consequence of it. We have given our word that the commerce should be open by proclamation as soon as privateering should be suppressed in the island, and the fulfilment of our promise may be claimed. But, on further consideration, I hope and presume that General

[1] This was a production of Mr. Pickering's, entitled by him "Observations on the 'Sketch of proposed Regulations,' for the trade of the Island of St. Domingo, received from the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty to the United States of America."

[2] This is a copy of the articles;

Points, on which there is an understanding between the governments of Great Britain and the United States of America, in consequence of the foregoing proposed regulations.

1. It is understood that Great Britain and the United States have a common interest in preventing the dissemination of dangerous principles among the slaves of their respective countries; and that they will mutually and sincerely attend to that interest, to guard both against the danger here alluded to in consequence of the proposed intercourse with St. Domingo.

2. That any infringement of the contemplated regulations which may be agreed upon with Toussaint, and which will constitute the basis of the determination of the two nations, respectively, to open a commercial intercourse with St. Domingo, or any hostility commenced, or manifestly intended, on his part, against either, shall lead to an immediate suspension of intercourse with that island, on the part of both nations, while the laws of the United States authorize such a suspension on their part.

3. That it is the interest of both nations to induce General Toussaint to refuse an asylum to any French armed vessels in the ports of St. Domingo; such an asylum being deemed incompatible with the safety of the proposed commercial intercourse.

4. That it is the positive object of both nations by pacific arrangements to put an end, *in toto*, or as nearly as possible, to all maritime operation or exertion of any kind in the island of St. Domingo.

5. That the American Consul-General in that island shall be instructed to assist in carrying into effect the proposed regulations.

6. That no commercial vessel of either nation shall be permitted to enter the port or ports to be opened, as before proposed, until the day to be fixed according to the fifth article of the regulations to be proposed to General Toussaint.

Maitland will settle this point, without any difficulty to us. I am very glad that you did not detain General Maitland till you could hear from me. Upon the whole, I think the negotiation has been conducted with caution and prudence, and the result has my fullest approbation.[1]

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 7 May, 1799.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 29th of April, and have considered the subject of it with as much attention as will be necessary to agree in general to your principles.[2] Merit I consider, however, as the only true scale of graduation in the army. Services and rank in the last war, or in any other war, are only to be taken into consideration as presumptive evidence of merit, and may at any time be set aside by contrary proof. Services and rank in civil life, and in time of peace, I think, ought not to be forgotten or neglected, for they are often of more utility and consequence to the public than military services. The officers, I think, ought not to be flattered with any positive assurance of rising in succession. The right, authority, and duty of government to depart from the line of succession,

7. As the present political state of St. Domingo is subject to constant change and fluctuation, and as even its situation at the moment is not perfectly ascertained, it is understood that the whole of the present arrangement shall be open to such future discussion and decision as the nature of the case, in the opinion of the respective governments, may demand.

Timothy Pickering.
Oliver Wolcott.
James McHenry.
Ben. Stoddert.
Charles Lee.

20 April, 1799.

[1] Owing to the immediate departure of General Maitland, the papers were drawn up by Mr. Pickering, with the assent of the other cabinet officers, and sent, without referring them to Mr. Adams, subject to his ultimate decision, however, to approve or reject the propositions made.

[2] Mr. McHenry recommended that the relative rank at the close of the revolutionary war, of all such officers as had served in that war, should govern, liable to exceptions in cases of extraordinary service or merit.

On the 23d of April, Mr. McHenry had addressed a letter to Mr. Hamilton, requesting his opinion on this subject. The reply does not appear, but it is fair to infer that it was the same as that presented by Mr. McHenry to the President as his own. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 250.

in clear cases of unusual merit, of extraordinary services, or uncommon talent, ought always to be asserted and maintained, and constantly to be held up to the view of the army.

Inclosed is a letter from Joseph Woodward, recommending Baldwin and Brown to be lieutenants. Another from Josiah Waters, soliciting some appointment. Another from Daniel Tillotson, soliciting a captaincy of infantry. Another from General Brooks, recommending Samuel Fowle. Another from Major Lillie. I own I am not able to read such histories without strong emotions. As this, however, might be intended to be confidential with me, I pray you to return it to me.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 8 May, 1799.

I have received, in your letter of the 30th April, the very handsome apology of Mr. Henry, and the letter of Chief Justice Ellsworth, from Halifax, of March 21st. In several conversations with Judge Ellsworth, I mentioned to him Governor Davie, as one among several whom I had in contemplation to appoint in the place of Governor Henry, if he should decline, as was apprehended by many. The character of this gentleman for abilities, integrity, and sound political principles, inclined my judgment in his favor, although personally a stranger to me. I am very glad the Chief Justice communicated the idea to him, and that he has not rejected it. I pray you to make out his commission and send it to him, and communicate the intelligence to Mr. Murray as soon as possible. I return you the letters of the Chief Justice and Mr. Henry, the latter of which I think you would do well to publish.

(Inclosed.)

PATRICK HENRY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Charlotte City, Virginia, 16 April, 1799.

Sir, — Your favor of the 25th ultimo did not reach me till two days ago. I have been confined for several weeks by a

severe indisposition, and am still so sick as to be scarcely able to write this.

My advanced age and increasing debility compel me to abandon every idea of serving my country, where the scene of operation is far distant and her interests call for incessant and long continued exertion. Conscious as I am of my inability to discharge the duties of envoy, &c., to France, to which, by the commission you send me, I am called, I herewith return it.

I cannot, however, forbear expressing, on this occasion, the high sense I entertain of the honor done me by the President and Senate in the appointment. And I beg you, Sir, to present me to them in terms of the most dutiful regard, assuring them that this mark of their confidence in me, at a crisis so eventful, is an agreeable and flattering proof of their consideration towards me, and that nothing short of an absolute necessity could induce me to withhold my little aid from an administration, whose ability, patriotism, and virtue, deserve the gratitude and reverence of all their fellow-citizens.

With sentiments of very high regard, &c.,

P. Henry.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 8 May, 1799.

The combination of a very few ideas has been sufficient to excite apprehensions that the West India Islands would soon become a scene of piracy. The dissolution of all principles of morals, government, and religion, the formal repeal of the ten commandments, by which it is become as lawful to covet, steal, kill, as it is to profane the Sabbath or commit adultery, the proclamation of liberty to the negroes in the West India Islands, and the policy of one or more nations of Europe to erect predatory powers in the West Indies, to be employed against the United States, as the Barbary powers in Europe have long been supported and encouraged against the small maritime states, have long ago raised suspicions and forebodings, that the most desperate wretches in Europe would be allured to the Islands, and give direction to the mass of African bones and sinews which is now in liberty and idleness, or trained to military discipline.

The buccaneering establishment on the Key near Matanzas must be broken up. I wish the Secretary of State to represent this intelligence to the Spanish minister at Philadelphia, and to our minister at Madrid. I am glad the Secretary of State intends to write to the Governor of the Havana.

I am heartily disposed to concur with you in the most spirited counsels, and active exertions, which the laws will authorize, to check and to punish this execrable establishment.[1]

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 10 May, 1799.

Sir, — I have the honor to inclose Mr. Liston's note of the 8th, requesting the usual *exequatur* for Thomas Barclay, Esq., and Benjamin Moodie, Esq., whom his Britannic majesty has appointed, the former Consul-General for the Eastern States, and the latter Consul for North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

Mr. Barclay is the gentleman who was the British commissioner for settling the question of the St. Croix boundary.

Regularly, the commissions of those gentlemen should be produced; the allowance of the *exequaturs* being predicated on the inspection of the consuls' commissions.

After a very indulgent but fatiguing trial of nine days, during which the jury were kept together, of John Fries, on a charge of high treason, the jury, at ten o'clock last evening, brought in their verdict, *Guilty*.

I have just learned that the jury decided without debate, or the least difference in sentiment. I before knew that the two judges were perfectly agreed as to the *treasonable* matter, and the *guilt* of the prisoner. The prompt verdict of the jury is the more remarkable, as there were two or three of them in the party in opposition to the government. But the nature of Fries's offence, and the evidence of his guilt, were so clear as to

[1] Mr. Stoddert in furnishing the information that such an establishment as is here described was about to be formed at a spot about sixty miles from the Havana, and was threatening the trade to Spanish America, advised the equipment of one frigate and two or three smaller vessels, with a land force of three hundred men, to break it up, in case the Governor of the island should decline to act.

remove or prevent doubt in the mind of every impartial man. Thus the case is represented to me, for I was not present at the trial. The length of the trial was owing chiefly to the examinations of many witnesses, a number of whom being Germans, interpreters were necessary.

This conviction is of the highest importance to vindicate the violated laws, and support the government. It was, therefore, anxiously expected by the real friends to the order and tranquillity of the country, and to the stability of its government. Among such men I have heard of but one opinion, that an *example* or *examples* of *conviction* and *punishment* of such high handed offenders were *essential*, to *ensure future obedience to the laws*, or *the exertions of our best citizens to suppress future insurrections*. The examples appear singularly important in Pennsylvania, where treason and rebellion have so repeatedly reared their heads. And painful as is the idea of taking the life of a man, I feel a calm and solid satisfaction that an opportunity is now presented, in executing the just sentence of the law, to crush that spirit, which, if not overthrown and destroyed, may proceed in its career, and overturn the government.

With great respect, &c. &c.

Timothy Pickering.

O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 11 May, 1799.

Sir,— After a very labored trial, Fries, who led the armed party at Bethlehem, has been convicted of treason ; he continued tranquil until the verdict of the jury was returned, when, and since, he has been much affected. His composure during the trial was not owing to stupidity, for, though an illiterate man, he is not deficient in sagacity. He confidently expected to be acquitted, and his hopes are supposed to have been founded on the opinion of Mr. Lewis, who, on all occasions since the commencement of the trial, has declared that the offence did not amount to treason. Both of the judges were decided in their definitions of the crime, and the evidence was complete, both as to the acts done, and of the intention to prevent the execution of the law. It is admitted on all hands that the trial has been

fair and impartial; the jury was respectable, and two of them were persons upon the bias of whose political sentiments calculations favorable to the prisoner were made. The jury received the charge at about six o'clock in the evening, when the court adjourned till ten; at the time appointed the verdict was returned, *guilty*.

I am told this morning of a circumstance which proves that the jury were governed by humane, delicate, and honorable sentiments. When they retired, it was agreed that, without previous argument among themselves, the opinion of each person should be given by ballot; by this trial it was found that the jury were unanimous.

Thus has ended a trial which has excited the greatest attention, and upon the issue of which the tranquillity of this part of the country has greatly depended. Fries said, after the trial, to Mr. Wood (one of the chief clerks of my office, who is also a clerk of the prison), that *great men* were at the bottom of this business. I do not know his meaning. B. McClenachan, of the House of Representatives, was certainly an agitator among the insurgents, but I do not know nor do I believe that the insurgents had any general views, other than to defeat the execution of the act of assessment. In general, the people are ignorant, strongly prejudiced against the measures of government, vindictive in their resentments, and I fear incapable of being influenced, except by their fears of punishment.

I have the honor, &c.

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

TO URIAH FORREST.

Quincy, 13 May, 1799.

I received on Saturday your friendly letter of 28 April, and I thank you for it, and should be very happy if it were in my power to comply with your advice, not so much on account of any real public utility, as in compliance with what you call the public sentiment. I have reason to believe, however, that this sentiment is chiefly in Philadelphia and Georgetown. "The people elected me to administer the government," it is true, and I do administer it here at Quincy, as really as I could do at Philadelphia. The Secretaries of State, Treasury, War, Navy,

and the Attorney-General, transmit me daily by the post all the business of consequence, and nothing is done without my advice and direction, when I am here, more than when I am in the same city with them. The post goes very rapidly, and I answer by the return of it, so that nothing suffers or is lost.

Your speculative conjectures concerning the views of parties on the chief seat of the synagogue, are founded in human nature, in attentive observation of life, and on actual facts. What then? They give me no anxiety.

Mrs. Adams, it is true, is better; but she is still in a state so delicate, and has such returns of that dreadful disorder, which kept her on the brink of the grave almost all the last summer, that it would be a presumptuous imprudence, little less criminal than deliberate suicide, for her to attempt to go one hundred miles south of this latitude, before the violent heat of summer shall be passed.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 13 May, 1799.

SIR,— I have received your favor of the 6th, and considered the copy of instructions to Mr. King,[2] which have been examined and unanimously approved by the heads of department. I am very well satisfied with them, on the whole, though I wish that in the tenth article you would introduce another idea in corroboration.[2] As "a principal means of annoying a maritime nation

[1] In absenting himself from the seat of government during the recess of Congress, Mr. Adams did no more than his predecessor, General Washington. There can be little doubt that the habit of cabinet officers assuming responsibility, and consulting with persons outside, to counteract the action of the President, when not agreeable, grew out of this practice. A remarkable instance of it in Washington's time is found in the case of the nomination of Mr. Rutledge to be Chief Justice. See Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. i. p. 219, 220.

[2] To negotiate a treaty with Russia.

[3] The tenth article stands as follows;

10. "The twenty-third article of our treaty with Prussia forbade the commissioning of privateers to take or destroy the trading vessels, or to interrupt the commerce of the contracting parties, in case a war should arise between them. But in the renewal of the Prussian treaty, if it should be renewed, this article is to be omitted. The lawfulness of privateering will not be questioned; but all possible precautions should be taken to prevent abuses. The policy of privateering is peculiarly applicable to the United States. Our public naval force is, and for some time to come will be, inconsiderable; but we are strong in the number of

would be our privateers," so our strongest motive, and fullest justification for using it, would be that our extensive commerce, spreading and branching all over the seas, is more exposed than that of any other nation to depredations, both of pirates and maritime powers.

I pray you to send a copy of these instructions to Mr. Adams at Berlin, and give him fresh instructions to agree with Prussia and Sweden both, in this instruction relative to the article of contraband of war, or to agree to the old article of contraband in our former treaties with those powers. I am determined to make no farther difficulty with either of these powers about the article of contraband, provided they will agree to the old one.

As I presume you have a copy of your draught of instructions to Mr. King, I shall keep the one you inclosed to me.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 16 May, 1799.

Sir,— I have received your letter of the 7th May, and since there appears a difference of opinion concerning the construction of the constitution and the law,[1] and as I see no necessity for an immediate appointment, I am content to suspend it for the present, perhaps till the meeting of the Senate.

I think well of Mr. Williams as a gentleman of science and literature, as a good citizen, and brave man. But his military knowledge is new to me. I wish to know if in early life he was one of Paddock's artillery company. At present, I am much

our seamen, in private wealth, and in the uncommon enterprise of our citizens. Hence, a principal means of annoying a maritime commercial enemy would be our privateers."

[1] This was upon the question raised in the letter of the 16th of April. See page 632.

It now appears that Mr. McHenry consulted Mr. Hamilton, who confirmed him in his opinion. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 255.

He had also consulted the Attorney-General, Mr. Lee, who considered an office created during the session of the Senate, and not filled by appointment, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, as a vacancy happening during the session, which the President cannot fill, during the recess, by the powers vested in him by the constitution, without a legislative act of Congress, enabling him to do it. This legislative act was passed on the 3d of March, 1799, entitled "an act authorizing the President of the United States to fill certain vacancies in the army and navy." He therefore thought the President had the power of appointment.

Mr. McHenry's letter says nothing of his having consulted Mr. Hamilton.

inclined to appoint him, or rather nominate him as major, and the others as captains, as you have proposed. I am happy in an opportunity to appoint Mr. Izard, as well as Mr. Barron; my sentiments of Lillie you know, and Ragsdale's recommendations are of the first and best kind. Inclosed are all the papers returned.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 16 May, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 10th, and have read the letter of Brigadier-General Macpherson to you of the 3d, and the letters of Mr. Chapman and Mr. Eyerly to him, with great pleasure.

I pray you to present to General Macpherson, and the officers and troops under his command in the late expedition,[1] my thanks for the prudence, caution, fortitude, and perseverance with which they have conducted this service, so necessary to their country, although undoubtedly disagreeable, to a happy and successful conclusion. This you will do in any manner, and at any time, which you shall judge most proper and convenient. I return you all the papers, as proper to be lodged in your office.

TO C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Quincy, 17 May, 1799.

I thank you for your favor of the 10th. I am told that Mr. Lewis is of opinion that Fries's crime amounts not to treason. Can you give me a minute of his reasons?[2]

[1] To quell the disturbances in Northampton County, Pennsylvania.

[2] The following abstract was sent by the Attorney-General in answer to this application.

Copy of Mr. Rawle's note of Mr. Lewis's reasons for the opinion that the crime of Fries was not treason.

United States v. *Fries.*

The substance of Mr. Lewis's argument, as to the question of treason in this case, was as follows:

"Treason consists in resisting, by force or means of intimidation, the government and laws of the country.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 17 May, 1799.

I last night received your favor of the 10th. Mr. Liston's note of the 8th was not inclosed as you intended. Mr. Barclay I know, and his *exequatur* will be ready. Mr. Moodie I know not, nor do I know or suspect any objection to him.

I thank you for the account of the trial of Fries, which, if it was attended to by as numerous a concourse of people in Philadelphia as it would have been in some other parts of the United States, must have made a deep and lasting and extensive impression on the public mind.

The issue of this investigation has opened a train of very serious contemplations to me, which will require the closest attention of my best understanding, and will prove a severe trial to my heart. The "*Motifs des Guerres*," &c., are received.

TO A. ST. CLAIR, GOVERNOR OF THE N. W. TERRITORY.

Quincy, 17 May, 1799.

Sir, — I thank you for your favor of April 8th, and especially for the pamphlet inclosed with it. I have read it with great pleasure, as a masterly refutation of its antagonist, in the style and manner of a gentleman, and seasoned with no more than was useful and agreeable of Attic salt. Happy am I to find such just sentiments countenanced, encouraged, and prevailing in the North-Western Territory. Although your wish, that my writings were more generally read, is very flattering to me, I am nevertheless not very confident that they will do much good. Mankind will not learn wisdom by experience in matters of government. They get rid of all such systems by slight sar-

To resist the execution of a single law is not treason, unless it is the militia law.

It is treason to resist the militia law, because the militia is the ultimate remedy to be employed by the executive authority to enforce all laws, and, therefore, if the militia law cannot be enforced, it may disable the executive from enforcing any of the laws."

Mr. Adams afterwards obtained from Messrs. Lewis and Dallas a full statement of their argument. This has been already printed in *Wharton's State Trials*, pp. 646 – 8.

casms, and say that theory is in favor of democracy. I say that theory is altogether in favor of mixed governments, as well as experience. But I am not about to write a lecture.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 17 May, 1799.

I thank you, Sir, for your favor of the 11th, which I received last night. The termination of the trial of Fries is an important, an interesting, and an affecting event. I am unable to conjecture the grounds of Mr. Lewis's opinion, and wish I had a sketch of them. Is Fries a native or a foreigner? Is he a man of property and independent, or is he in debt? What has been his previous life? industrious or idle, sober or intemperate? It is of importance to discover, if possible, the *great men* alluded to by Fries, in his observation to Mr. Wood, as at the bottom of this business; and the evidence of any agitation among the insurgents ought to be collected. It is of moment, also, to ascertain whether the insurgents had any general views or extensive communication with others of similar dispositions in other counties, or correspondence with other States. We ought, also, to inquire whether Fries is the most culpable among the guilty, if that can be known. It highly concerns the people of the United States, and especially the federal government, that, in the whole progress and ultimate conclusion of this affair, neither humanity be unnecessarily afflicted, nor public justice essentially violated, nor the public safety endangered.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 19 May, 1799.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 10th, and read Mr. Sewall's latter of 25th April and your answer.[1] The reasoning in the latter is so satisfactory that I have determined to send it on to Mr. Sewall to-morrow. Nevertheless, I think with you that some of our fast sailing vessels might be employed to

[1] This was an application to know whether a convoy or any public protection would be afforded to the American commerce with Bilbao in Spain.

advantage in a cruise on the coasts of Spain and France during the hurricane season in the West Indies. Nor do I think we ought to wait a moment to know whether the French mean to give us any proofs of their desire to conciliate with us. I am for pursuing all the measure of defence which the laws authorize us to adopt, especially at sea, with as much zeal and to as great an extent as if we knew the first vessels would bring a declaration of war against us from Paris.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 21 May, 1799.

Sir, — Your favor of the 15th is received. I have no doubt that an offence, committed on board a public ship of war, on the high seas, is committed within the jurisdiction of the nation to whom the ship belongs. How far the President of the United States would be justifiable in directing the judge to deliver up the offender, is not clear.[1] I have no objection to advise and request him to do it.

I am quite of your opinion of the prudence of withholding from the public Mr. Henry's letter, and not insisting on Governor Davie's formal acceptance at present, for the reason you adduce.[2] I think, however, we ought to be informed that he will accept, when his acceptance shall become indispensable.

[1] The District Judge of South Carolina had declined to deliver up to Sir Hyde Parker, a seaman who had been engaged in a mutiny, and murder of the officers of the British frigate Hermione.

[2] Mr. Pickering says in his letter;

"I have this moment received your favor of the 8th instant, and will make out Governor Davie's commission. But for the very reason that he is the Governor of North Carolina, and it is important to that State and to the Union that such a man should hold the reins of government there, I beg leave to suggest the expediency of not requiring his immediate acceptance of the commission, because it would vacate his office of Governor, while it remained uncertain whether he would be ever called to proceed on his mission to France. Perfect silence on the subject, *at present*, appearing to me most eligible, I further beg leave to ask whether it will not be eligible to *suspend* the publication of Governor Henry's letter, until it shall be necessary to make public Governor Davie's appointment."

TO WILLIAM S. SMITH.

Quincy, 22 May, 1799.

I have received your letter of the 16th, and the bundle of papers inclosed, with a great deal of pain. The thing has not a good appearance. Mr. Shieflin would have done better to have addressed his letter and papers to me than to you, who are not the Secretary of War.[1] You are suspected and have been accused of improper speculations in the neighborhood of Detroit, and in connection with characters whose friendship does you no honor. These Indian pretensions are suspected to have been excited by you and your associates.

I send you back all the papers. If you will take upon yourself to send them to the Secretary of War, you may; I will not. If you desire the command of Detroit, you must solicit it of the Secretary at War, the Commander-in-chief of the army, or Major-General Hamilton. I will not interfere with the discipline and order of the army, because you are my son-in-law.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 25 May, 1799.

Sir, — I received last night your favor of the 18th. The misfortune of the Hero is much to be regretted.[2] The necessary orders, I presume, will be despatched to her at Jamaica; but I am not sufficiently informed of her situation to be able to judge what those orders ought to be.

The anonymous letter you inclosed is curious enough. If it is required of me to procure satisfaction for every family ruined by the French, upon pain of assassination, I believe Mr. Assassin may do his work.[3]

[1] Mr. Shieflin was an Indian agent; and the complaint was aimed at the Secretary of War, Mr. McHenry, for his treatment of the Indians.

[2] A ship of five or six hundred tons, laden with masts and timber, intended for the regency of Algiers.

[3] Of anonymous letters, in every variety of tone, there are numbers among the papers of the Adamses, both father and son. As the one above alluded to is brief, it may serve for a specimen of a class.

"President Adams.

Myself and family are ruined by the French. If you do not procure satisfaction for my losses, when a treaty is made with them, I am undone forever, and you must be a villain to your country!!! *Assassination* shall be your lot, if

C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 28 May, 1799.

Sir, — I had the honor to receive your letter of the 17th; but, not having been present at the trial of Fries, it was not in my power to give you a minute of Mr. Lewis's reasons for the opinion that the crime of Fries was not treason, without applying to Mr. Rawle on the subject, who has given me a short note, of which a copy is inclosed.[1] The reasons were thought by the court insufficient, and so they seem also to me.

You have no doubt been informed that a new trial has been granted to Fries. I understand that, after the conviction, it became known to the prisoner's counsel, that one of the jury had on several occasions expressed that he thought Fries and all concerned with him deserved to be hanged. This Judge Iredell conceived to be enough to show that the juror was disqualified to pass upon the prisoner. Judge Peters was of a different opinion, but ultimately concurred in it, rather than to allow the condemnation to rest on his own judgment.[2] Mr. Carpenter, who takes the debates of Congress in short hand, has taken all the proceedings on this trial, which are in the press and will speedily be published. A copy shall be transmitted for your more particular information, so soon as it shall be in my power.

With perfect respect, I am, Sir, &c.

Charles Lee.

restitution is lost to America through YOUR means, or if ever you agree to a peace without it. The subsistence of thousands, who have lost their all, *depends upon it.*

A ruined merchant,
alas! with ten children!!!
made beggars by the French."

1 See page 648, note.

2 On the same point Mr. Pickering writes on the 18th;

"To the surprise and chagrin of many, Mr. Lewis's motion for a new trial in the case of John Fries has prevailed."

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 28 May, 1799.

Sir, — I received yesterday your favor of the 21st. I thank you for the intelligence, and rejoice that our affairs with Algiers are no worse.

Your other letter of the same date arrived at the same time. I have read the papers relative to Mr. Daniel Hawley, and agree with you in opinion that there is evidence of unskilfulness in business, at least enough to justify us in looking for a more adroit consul, or agent, or both, in Havana, a place of great importance to us. I return all the papers. I also return the paper relative to Ferdinand Stevenson and his pardon. The judgment of Judge Griffin, and the Secretary of the Treasury, acquiesced in by you, will be sufficient to justify me in this kind of work,[1] which is always so easy and pleasant that we may be sometimes in danger of doing too much of it.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 5 June, 1799.

Sir,— I have received your favor of the 27th May, and have read the inclosures. The discipline of the army will require the punishment of death for desertion in many cases, and none perhaps will deserve it more than that of Richard Hunt; and I should not hesitate to sign the warrant for his execution, serious as is the act of depriving a fellow of his life, but I wish to know, whether the officers who composed the court-martial were commissioned, and if not, what evidence we shall rely upon of the appointments, in case the legality of this business should be examined by a grand jury.[2]

I wish the members of courts-martial would consider them-

[1] A pardon.

[2] See the letter of Mr. Hamilton to the Secretary of War, of the 20th of April, stating the case of Hunt, and urging a confirmation of the sentence. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 219. Another also at a later period urges upon Mr. McHenry to "bestow great pains upon satisfying the President that severity was indispensable." It bears the same date with Mr. McHenry's. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 263.

selves counsel for the prisoner, and admonish him against the plea of guilty, and even assert that, if he persists in it, they would still examine witnesses to the fact of desertion.[1]

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 7 June, 1799.

I thank you for the details in your favor of the 29th May. Captain Truxtun has deserved well of his country, and will, as he ought, have their thanks, as well as yours and mine. But I should have been much easier on account of the safety of our commerce, if he had remained longer in the West Indies. The Merrimac has been detained by contrary winds, but I believe is now gone. Talbot has arrived, and came up in his boat to see me. I was rejoiced at the sight of him, and have full confidence in his capacity and activity. His appointment to the command gives good satisfaction as, I am informed.

We shall do nothing with St. Domingo until we hear again from Stevens. The annihilation of privateering in the island, must be an indispensable condition of future intercourse. We can do nothing but in concert with Maitland, and what his reception may be is uncertain. The English, in my opinion, have made much mischief for themselves as well as for us in that island. The hopes of our merchants, of great profit from the trade, will be found too sanguine, and the evils in store seem not to be foreseen.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 7 June, 1799.

Sir,— I return you all the letters of Mr. King and Mr. Humphreys which were inclosed with your letter of May 30th. Encourage Mr. King, I pray you, in your letters and instructions to him, to persevere, with all the decision which may be consistent with decency and politeness, in denying the right of

[1] In this case the man pleaded guilty, and but a single witness was examined. In a later letter of the 13th Mr. McHenry says;

"I think it probable that some of the officers composing the court, at least, were of the twelve new regiments, and consequently without commissions."

The fact was that not a single officer had received a commission.

British men-of-war to take from our ships of war any men whatever, and from our merchant vessels any Americans, or foreigners, or even Englishmen. There is no principle under heaven, by which they can justify taking by force, even from an American merchant vessel, even a deserter from their army or navy, much less private seamen. If they have a right, we have the same. I know not whether the exercise of it would not be most useful to us. Their merchant ships are more numerous than ours, and they have more foreigners, Swedes, Italians, Portuguese, Spaniards, Danes, Dutch, &c., than we have. If our men-of-war had a right to take them, we might easily man our navy; but the thing has no principle.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 June, 1799.

I return you the papers inclosed in your letter of the 1st. I have carefully read the proceedings of the court-martial on Ensign David Fero.

It will be necessary for the legislature, at their next session, to make some provisions for cases of standing mute. The best possible jurisprudence in this case in my opinion is, to order the refusal to plead to be recorded, and then proceed to trial in all respects as if the defendant had pleaded not guilty. I would not even refuse to hear him in his own defence, or by counsel, and would swear and examine all witnesses, and admit every species of evidence in his favor, offered by himself or any of his friends, as freely and fully, as upon the general issue. I should have been better pleased if the court-martial had extended all this patience and candor to Mr. Fero. The result would, I believe, have been the same, however, and although I do not see my way clear to confirm the sentence of the court-martial,[1] I have no scruple to conform to your opinion and dismiss Ensign David Fero from the service.

[1] An extremely moderate judgment of the proceedings. It would seem that this court was constituted by the sole authority of the captain commandant; that the prisoner, prior to the qualification of the members, was asked if he had objections to any of them; that he did object to the commandant and two members, and that, this objection having been overruled by them, he then refused to plead. In Great Britain a decision upon such premises would have subjected the members to severe penalties in the common-law courts. For an instance, see vol. ii. p. 102, note.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 15 June, 1799.

Sir, — Inclosed is a petition from John Sylvester for a pardon, a copy of the record of his conviction, a petition which he presented to Governor Sumner, and a certificate and request signed by a large number of respectable and worthy citizens of Plymouth in his favor. My answer to his relation, who brought me the petition, was, that the crime was of so serious a nature, that, whatever might be my disposition, I dared not to pardon it, without serious deliberation and the best advice. I promised him, however, to transmit the papers to the Secretary of the Treasury, and Attorney-General, and request their opinions. This promise I now perform by praying you to take the opinion of the heads of department if you think it necessary, or at least of the Attorney-General, and transmit to me the result of your and their deliberations. If you should recommend a pardon, I request you to send one on for signature to, Sir, &c.[1]

John Adams.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 15 June, 1799.

Sir, — I received yesterday your important letter of the 7th. The form of a proclamation is sufficient, I believe, for the purpose, and I have signed it, that it may be completed and published at a proper season without loss of time.

I am glad the heads of department did not form a definitive opinion on the very important question whether it will be expedient to renew the commerce, without a concurrence of the British.[2] My judgment inclines the same way at present with theirs; but we had better wait for further information. I am afraid that the jealousy and avidity of the English will do an

[1] On the fifth of July, a report was made upon this case, and signed by the four secretaries, concluding as follows; —

"As the crime is of a dangerous tendency, and as the tender of service in the navy cannot be accepted consistently with public policy, we are respectfully of opinion that a pardon ought not to be granted."

[2] An elaborate paper was drawn up by Mr. Pickering upon the unfavorable aspect of General Maitland's negotiation with Toussaint, which was concurred in by all the cabinet officers.

injury to themselves, as well as to us; but we cannot help it. My opinion is that, if the powers of St. Domingo will not admit British ships of war or commerce into their ports, the British government ought to be contented with sufficient assurances of the neutrality of that island, during the war between England and France, and not insist on defeating the connection between the United States and St. Domingo. It is my earnest desire, however, to do nothing without the consent, concert, and coöperation of the British government in this case. They are so deeply interested that they ought to be consulted, and the commerce of the island is not worth to us the risk of any dispute with them. No time ought to be lost in transmitting to Dr. Stevens instructions concerning the part he is to act, and the language he ought to hold. I fully agree with you and the heads of department, in the opinion of the propriety of the sentiments suggested by you to be communicated to him. Dr. Stevens's letters, public and private, have opened the politics of St. Domingo in a very intelligible manner. The whole is so natural that it is easily to be believed.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 19 June, 1799.

Sir,— I received last night your favor of the 12th, which, with all its inclosures, shall be sent to the attorney of the district, that he may investigate the facts and make report to me. Every complaint of the kind from the British minister shall be treated with great respect, and examined with the utmost candor,[1] being from inclination as well as a sense of duty, disposed to cultivate the best understanding, as well as to do ample justice in all cases to his nation.

TO JOHN DAVIS, DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Quincy, 19 June, 1799.

Sir,— Inclosed is a letter from the Secretary of State, of the 12th of June, a note of the British minister to him of the 11th,

[1] A complaint against two American privateers, for stopping an English vessel and breaking the seals of British despatches on board.

a copy of instructions for the private armed vessels of the United States, and of the act, further to protect the commerce of the United States, and a blank copy of a bond. I pray you, Sir, to make inquiry into this transaction, and to inform the owners of the ships complained of, and make report to me, and also to return me the papers, when you have made the use of them you may have occasion for.

As it is my determination to demand of the British government satisfaction for all insults and injuries, committed by British subjects on American citizens, natural equity as well as sound policy requires that I should do all in my power to give satisfaction when insults and injuries are committed by American citizens on British subjects, by punishing the authors of them.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 19 June, 1799.

Sir, — I return you the selection of two Majors from North Carolina, and that of officers for South Carolina and Georgia, with the letters of Generals Pinckney and Washington, with that of Mr. Steele. I am satisfied with these recommendations, and approve the selections. I return the proceedings of the court-martial in the cases of the deserters. The absolute necessity of examples in such cases as that of Richard Hunt, is very deeply impressed on my mind, and I should not dare to pardon him, if the proceedings are all regular. By the Constitution the President has power, by and with the advice of the Senate, to *appoint* officers, and by the same Constitution the President shall commission all the officers of the United States. A question occurred to me whether the signature of the commission is not the act of appointment, and whether any other evidence of appointment will be admitted by the courts of law; in short, whether there can be an officer without a commission. I pray you to lay the proceedings of the court-martial and the foregoing constitutional questions before the heads of department, and request their opinions. If they are unanimous, I shall order the execution. I have interlined six words in the form of the warrant, which I return. I should be sorry that such an instrument should go out of my hands, with my signature to it, with any

interlineations. If you return a fair copy to me, with the advice of your colleagues, I shall sign it.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 21 June, 1799.

Sir, — In your letter of the 13th you hint that "attempts are making to draw into question the solidity of the public credit;" but you have not explained the particulars, and I am at a loss to conjecture the facts which you may allude to.[1]

Public credit can never be steady and really solid without a fixed medium of commerce. That we have not such a medium, you know has been my opinion for several years. The fluctuations of our circulating medium have committed greater depredations upon the property of honest men, than all the French piracies. To what greater lengths this evil may be carried, I know not. The Massachusetts legislature are authorizing a number of new banks. The cry is, the immense advantage to agriculture. Credit cannot be solid, where a man is liable to be paid a debt, contracted to-day, by one half the value a year hence.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY AT WAR.

Quincy, 24 June, 1799.

Sir, — I have received your letter of the 18th, and have read Count Rumford's letter to Mr. King. For five or six years past I have been attentive to the character of this gentleman, and have read some of his essays. From these I have formed an esteem for his genius, talents, enterprise, and benevolence, which will secure him from me, in case of his return to his native country, a reception as kind and civil as it may be in my power to give him. But you know the difficulties those gentlemen have, who left the country as he did, either to give or receive entire satisfaction. I should not scruple, however, to give him any of the appointments you mention,[1] and leave it with you

[1] A part of Mr. Wolcott's letter is printed in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. p. 242.

[1] Mr. McHenry proposed to offer to Count Rumford a vacant commission of Lieutenant-Colonel and Inspector of Artillery, or to make him an Engineer and Superintendent of the proposed Military School.

to make such proposals to him, through Mr. King, within the limits you have drawn in your letter, as you should think fit. I return Mr. King's letter, and inclose one from Mr. William Williams, a very respectable personage, recommending Rufus Tyler to be an officer in the army.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 2 July, 1799.

Sir, — I thank you for the favor of your letter of 24th June, and the copies inclosed of despatches from Stevens and Maitland, which I suppose it is unnecessary for me to return. The necessary alterations in the proclamation[1] will, of course, be made by you, with the advice of the heads of department. Harmony with the English, in all this business with St. Domingo, is the thing I have most at heart. The result of the whole is, in my mind, problematical and precarious. Toussaint has evidently puzzled himself, the French government, the English cabinet, and the administration of the United States. All the rest of the world know as little what to do with him as he knows what to do with himself. His example may be followed by all the islands, French, English, Dutch, and Spanish; and all will be one day played off against the United States by European powers. I think we have committed one great mistake in exchanging prisoners with Guadaloupe. We have lent a thousand men to that island, some of whom have been taken three times by our cruisers. We should soon exhaust the islands of seamen, if we brought all to America.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 3 July, 1799.

Inclosed is a letter from the president and professor of divinity of our university, recommending William Frothingham to be a chaplain on board of some frigate. I know not whether the

[1] A mistake was made in the proclamation, as to the time of opening the ports of Cape François and Port-au-Prince, to vessels sailing from the United States.

commanders of our ships have given much attention to this subject; but in my humble opinion we shall be very unskilful politicians, as well as bad Christians and unwise men, if we neglect this important office in our infant navy.

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 7 July, 1799.

Sir, — As it is an excellent principle for every man in public life to magnify his office, and make it honorable, I admire the dexterity with which you dignify yours, by representing an army, and means adequate to its support, as the first thing necessary to make the nation respected. Genius in a general is oftener an instrument of divine vengeance than a guardian angel. Stoddert, I warrant you, instead of representing the navy as the fourth and last article necessary for national respectability, would have felt the importance of his office enough to have stated a navy as the first and most indispensable. It would not be necessary for me to decide the controversy between you; if it should be, I should be at no loss. My answer would be ready.

I have read the plan for providing and issuing of military supplies, inclosed in your favor of the 29th of June. I suppose I may keep it, in order to recur to it upon occasion. I wish to be informed whether this is proposed to be adopted by Congress into a law. I presume the President's authority alone is not adequate to the establishment of it. I wish it to be considered by the Secretary of the Treasury and by yourself, as closely as possible, before it is recommended. The discipline of the army, and the national economy, are deeply interested in it. The Secretary of State has had experience which ought to be consulted upon this occasion.[1]

[1] In transmitting the plan alluded to, which was the work of General Hamilton, Mr. McHenry had ended his letter in this way; —

"Being a nation, and not of the lowest order, there are three things essential to the maintenance of our proper grade among the powers of the earth. 1. An army and means adequate to its support. 2. A system calculated to keep its wants regularly supplied. 3. Genius in the general who commands it. If we can combine these three things with a navy, and I hope we can, we shall have nothing to fear from without or within."

Herein is visible the germ of the difference of opinion between the President

TO SILAS TALBOT.

Quincy, 8 July, 1799.

Sir, — I have this moment received your favor of this day's date by Mr. Tarbell, and had before received your note. I can give no answer to any of your propositions, nor determine any thing concerning officers or men, until I know who is to command the Constitution. Your refusal to accept the commission has ruined all my designs. It was altogether unexpected to me. I know not the facts at present with precision enough to decide between your pretensions and those of Captain Truxtun. If I must appoint Captain Little, I must appoint all his officers, or at least consult him which of them to take with him, and which to remove from the Constitution. If I should appoint Sever, I must do the same. I know of no other captain at hand. In short, I see no possibility of getting the Constitution to sea, unless you go in her, under a fortnight or three weeks, if so soon. If she must remain in harbor so long, it will be better to send the Boston to sea, and complete her crew out of the Constitution. But in this case I cannot appoint Little to the command of the Constitution. It will be impossible for me to arrange any thing without a personal conference with you. If you would accept the commission, altered so as to leave the question of rank undecided, to be determined hereafter by a council of officers, this should be done. Assurances have been given you, as I understand, by Mr. Stoddert, that you should not be ordered to serve with Truxtun without absolute necessity. These assurances I am willing to confirm. I am, however, fully of opinion that I must see you before I can do any thing. If you cannot come here, I would meet you anywhere; but it will take time and trouble to concert time and place, so that I believe you had better come here, if you can, to-morrow morning as early as possible, or next day, or leave it till Thursday.

I have this day forwarded to Captain Little his sailing orders

and three of his cabinet directed by Mr. Hamilton, which made itself visible at a later period. The former rested upon the navy, the latter upon the army, as the *principal* means of defence. Both favored a military school. *Hamilton's Works*, Hamilton to McHenry, vol. v. p. 240. McHenry to Hamilton, p. 401. Hamilton to King, vol. vi. p. 417.

and instructions, received only this morning from the Secretary of the Navy. If he is completely ready in all other respects, I am willing to fill up his complement from the Constitution. But the service on which the Constitution is ordered, is at least as pressing, as the other, and perhaps more so.

I have the honor to be, with great esteem,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 8 July, 1799.

SIR, — The Constitution[1] employs my thoughts by day and my dreams by night. Captain Talbot has written to you in his letter of the 7th of June, which I return, his candid and impartial opinions, according to the information he received. But Beale was absent by the advice of his physicians, and Hull was present. I mean no insinuation by this against Mr. Hull, whose character is in my mind fair, and his conduct irreproachable. No lieutenant in the service stands fairer in my mind.[2] But I see no reason for discouraging Beale, by turning him out of the ship, for I believe him to be equal to Hull in every respect, even in age. I believe Beale to have had great injustice done him by little passions and a miserable caprice, which I will not explain at present, because I shall probably, though not certainly, consent to his removal, more because he, and his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, have been my neighbors, and to avoid suspicion of partiality for that cause, than for any other reason.[3] Mr. Knox I have made a lieutenant, with an express condition, that he should not serve on board this ship. Mr. Pitt's resignation I have requested Captain Talbot to accept, so that the midshipmen will now be according to his mind. I would have no great difficulty with midshipmen or lieutenants. There is not one among them I would not instantly remove, if the service could be benefited by it. But the refusal of Talbot to accept his commission is a serious affair. It was wholly unexpected to me. I supposed he had his com-

[1] Frigate.

[2] Isaac Hull, afterwards celebrated as the commander of this ship.

[3] Mr. Stoddert had recommended his removal to another vessel, on account of personal difficulties among the officers.

mission before, and that all was settled. You have not laid the papers before me. I can only judge of the pretensions of Truxtun and Talbot, or Talbot and Truxtun, by the general idea I have of the times and circumstances of their appointments, in some of which I may be mistaken. Talbot says, there are captains at hand. I know not to whom he alludes, unless they are Sever and Little. But the devil has been at work with his malignant whispers about Sever as well as about Beale, and the merchants of Boston expect that Little will be the Nelson of the United States, and they will be very loth to release him. Pardon the impunity[1] of the expression. Talbot is very satisfactory to officers and men, to the merchants and politicians of Boston and the State, and the loss of him will occasion a very serious alarm. I would go on board the ship every day and converse with Talbot, but custom requires that the welkin must be rended, and the world alarmed, if I set my foot on board; and Talbot cannot leave the ship. As to Dobel, I have not yet found one human being who reports in his favor. I have employed as independent and impartial men as the world affords, to sound the opinions of merchants and others, and not one word of approbation of his appointment has yet reached me. Talman, although he has his appointment of lieutenant, shall not go on board of this ship against the judgment of the officers. His character is respectable, but his talent for command is doubted by others, as well as those who spoke of him to Talbot.

With great anxiety on account of this ship, I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 July, 1799.

I have received your letter of the 8th of this month, and have read the letter from Major-General Hamilton, and the proceedings of the court-martial in the case of Joseph Perkins. All circumstances considered, I think this instance the least capable of a pardon of any which has been laid before me. I have thought it my duty to sign the warrant for his execution, and return it inclosed with all the other papers. My own opinion

[1] So in the copy, but obviously an error.

is, that a commission is not the exclusive evidence of appointments to office; but as chicanery may start popular objections, if the heads of department have any serious doubt in the case of Richard Hunt, you may submit this to them also.[1]

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 19 July, 1799.

I agree with you in your opinion, expressed in your favor of the 12th, that both an army and navy establishment are essential to the present and future interests and greatness of the United States, and that we must run the risks which other nations have run. It appeared to me that offices were created, and salaries made necessary, in the plan for supplying the army, which would require the interposition of Congress. But if the powers already given to administration are sufficient, I am satisfied.[2] I wish only that the heads of department may be satisfied, and that no embarrassments may be brought upon them, which they are not previously apprised of.

[1] This question was submitted by Mr. McHenry in a long letter addressed to his colleagues.

Mr. Wolcott drew a distinction between civil and military commissions, and thought the members of this court were military officers, without commissions.

Mr. Pickering thought the appointment of an officer might be complete without a commission — this being only the best evidence of it.

Mr. Stoddert agreed with Mr. Pickering in his opinion, but objected to all the later proceedings in Hunt's case on another account.

When the proceedings were first presented to Mr. McHenry, it did not appear on the face of them, that two thirds of the members present had concurred, as required, in a sentence of death, by the 8th article of the appendix to the rules of war. They were returned to General Hamilton, who caused the omission to be supplied by an interlineation in the sentence, and the President of the court, and the judge advocate, added their certificate that more than two thirds of the members did concur, and that the omission so to state it was accidental.

Mr. Stoddert thought that the President and judge advocate had no right by themselves to assume such an authority. But he thought that the original omission might not vitiate the proceeding, if it had not been the practice established in court-martials heretofore to insert the form.

The celebrated case of *Marbury* v. *Madison*, and the act of Mr. Jefferson in annulling the appointment of justices of the peace by withholding their commissions, will occur to the mind of every reader.

[2] See page 654 for Mr. Adams's first letter on this subject. Mr. McHenry thought the powers amply sufficient, but he promised to submit the question to the members of the cabinet, for their mature opinions. None such are to be found among Mr. Adams's papers.

TO THOMAS MIFFLIN.

Quincy, 19 July, 1799.

I have received the letter your Excellency did me the honor to write me on the 5th of this month, with the copy of Chief Justice McKean's letter to your Excellency, and two letters of Mr. Liston. These last I shall transmit to the Secretary of State, to be restored to the writer of them, according to the idea of your Excellency, with the best apology that the subject will admit of, for the freedom which has been improperly taken with his correspondence by opening the letters. The safety and honor of nations is so much concerned in the universal respect that is, or ought to be shown to the despatches of ambassadors, that it is to be regretted that any of our citizens should have been guilty of the fault of opening these.[1]

TO J. McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 19 July, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 12th, and have considered the opinions of the heads of department.[2] I wish that courts-martial may be advised to be as cautious as possible, in all their proceedings, especially in cases of life, because the discipline of the army will depend much upon this habit. But the crime of Richard Hunt is of so deep a die, that I have not seen my way clear to avoid the signature of the warrant for his execution, which is here returned. Yet if you and General Hamilton think that one example may suffice for the purposes of public justice, the execution of Hunt or Pierce may be respited.[3]

[1] Mr. Liston's messenger, Isaac Livesey, had been arrested in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on a well grounded charge of horse stealing. His trunks had been forced, and the letters of Mr. Liston opened by the officers, apparently without any ill intent.

[2] See page 656, note, for the substance of these opinions.

[3] This suggestion seems to have been adopted by General Hamilton, in the case of Hunt. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. p. 289.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 19 July, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 11th, and have read Mr. Davis's[1] letter inclosed in it, of June 29. My own opinion coinciding with yours and his, I have signed, and now inclose the pardon of John Scotchler, not however without some serious apprehensions of the consequences of tenderness, for cases of such dangerous example.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 20 July, 1799.

Sir,— I have your favor of the 13th, received only last night. I sent you lately Mr. Liston's two letters, with one from Governor Mifflin, and a copy from Chief Justice McKean. I will not comment on the letters of Mr. Liston, nor examine whether all his sentiments are just or politic.[2] But I heartily reprobate the outrage on the British government, in violating the seals of its accredited minister to the United States, and am desirous of taking such notice of it, as the respect we owe, not only to the government of Great Britain, but to ourselves, demands. I pray you, therefore, to refer this business to the attorney of the district, in the absence of the Attorney-General, with instructions to make a diligent inquiry, and strictly to prosecute the persons he may find guilty of any breach of the law of nations, or the land. The publication of these letters is a crime in somebody, I know not whom.[3]

I am, &c.

John Adams.

[1] John Davis, District Attorney of Massachusetts, afterwards for a long period judge of the district court.

[2] They were addressed to Mr. Russell, president of the British frontier in Upper Canada. They are curious as imputing to the administration a design to encourage the revolt of Toussaint against France, in St. Domingo, when Mr. Pickering expressly declares that the President would do no such thing. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 399. See page 635, note. Wharton's *State Trials*, p. 683.

[3] Two indictments were drawn, but the grounds being found insufficient, the prosecution was discontinued.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 23 July, 1799.

Sir, — It always gives me pain, when I find myself obliged to differ in opinion from any of the heads of department;[1] but, as our understandings are not always in our own power, every man must judge for himself. In the case of Captain Talbot, I am perfectly clear, in my own mind, that he has been a captain in the navy of the United States from the time of his appointment, in 1794, to this hour; that a legal title, and an estate in his office, was then vested in him; and that he has never been divested of either. The suspension of his pay and subsistence was no deprivation of his office, any more than shaking off the apples is cutting down the tree. The principle is well known, and established in a multitude of cases. Sequestration of the uses and profits of lands or tenements, by the acts of the legislature, is not a destruction of the title, or a divestment of the estate. Suspensions of the functions, are no deprivation of the offices. The Dukes of Norfolk, for ages, were disqualified to discharge their functions on account of their Catholic religion, yet they remained Dukes of Norfolk, and their titles and offices descended from generation to generation without any degradation of rank. President Washington made the distinction at the time, and, instead of discharging or dismissing Captain Talbot from his office, or annulling his appointment, only informed him that, in consequence of an act of Congress, his pay and subsistence must be suspended, or must cease for the present; but, at the same time, expressed his desire that he would still stand ready to engage again in the service when he should be called. Had President Washington continued in office, he might have given Talbot the command of a ship, and ordered him his pay and subsistence, without a fresh nomination to the Senate, and so might the successor to the office of President. Nothing can be inferred from my nomination of him, but my desire to give satisfaction to the Senate and the public. Had the Senate

[1] The opinion of Mr. Stoddert, fortified by that of the Attorney-General, had been that, through the reduction of the navy in 1796, Silas Talbot, one of three officers discharged from service, had lost his right of precedence of Captain Truxtun who had been retained, so that, on his restoration to the service in 1798, he was to be considered as a junior captain.

refused their advice and consent, I might have desisted from my intention of employing him; but the repetition of their consent is certainly no diminution of his title. But had Talbot been expressly dismissed, and his appointment annulled, for no fault, by President Washington, it would have made no alteration in my opinion. Talbot, upon being called into service again, ought to have his former rank, which he held under the same constitution of government, and in the same department of the public service.

Far be it from me to depreciate the merits, services, or talents of Captain Truxtun. I respect, I esteem, and, especially since his late glorious action, I love the man. His gallant behavior and splendid conquest of the Insurgente have won him laurels, which I hope he will live to wear for many years after I shall be no more. But this meritorious conduct makes no alteration in my judgment in the state of this question. It is no more an argument for promoting him over Talbot, than it is for promoting him over the heads of Nicholson and Barry, which no man will advocate or propose. If he is to be promoted, as a reward for a great action, his promotion ought to be as impartial as possible to all other officers. One ought not to be singled out, as a victim to be slighted and wounded alone.

It is impossible to finish this letter, without saying something of talents, services, and general merit. In all these points, in my opinion, Talbot will not suffer by a comparison with any naval officer in the service. Delicate as this subject is, I must hint at a few particulars, which appear not to be sufficiently known. Exploits of twenty years' age in history are little attended to by the present generation. Talbot's talents and services in civil life, as a representative in Congress, as an agent for the liberation of our seamen in the West Indies, and even in fitting out our ships lately, are of very respectable character; but his services, last war, far outweigh all the services which were ever performed by Truxtun, to the United States, during his whole life. I should regret sincerely and extremely the loss of Captain Truxtun to the navy, and to the United States, and I confidently hope and believe he will not think of a resignation. But, if it must come to such a crisis, that I should be compelled to say which officer I would retain in the service, I should not hesitate a moment to say, it must be Talbot. Trux-

tun is a new man in the service of the United States. Talbot has served them very long.

There are two principles which produce a tenaciousness of rank. One is a sense of honor and consciousness of dignity, which cannot bear disgrace or degradation; the other is a selfish vanity and aspiring ambition, which is desirous of rising at any rate, and leaping over the heads of all others who are higher. Talbot is, in my opinion, undoubtedly in the first case, and I sincerely hope Truxtun will not prove himself in the last. Talbot cannot descend without disgrace, and loss of reputation, and confidence in the world. Truxtun stands on safe ground, and will lose no character or confidence by not rising. He has not even a colorable or plausible pretence for rising, whatever an unthinking, undiscriminating popularity may say. I will not be the dupe of that popularity.

I promised you some hints of Talbot's services. In May, 1775, he was elected a captain of a company by the legislature of Rhode Island, when he raised a full company, and marched to the camp near Boston, where he continued until the enemy were driven away in 1776. He then marched with the army for New York; but upon his arrival at New London with the army, he was drafted with two hundred men to man Commodore Hopkins's squadron, which had just arrived there from a cruise. The draft was made to help the fleet, bound from New London to Newport, the better to defend the ships, in case they should fall in, as was expected, with two British twenty gun ships, cruising off Newport. The squadron arrived without seeing an enemy at Newport, when he left the fleet and embarked in a small vessel, with his soldiers, and landed in the city of New York.

In the course of the campaign of 1776, some fire ships were equipped at New York with the view of endeavoring to destroy the British fleet and army, lying then at a particular place. When they were ready for service, the Commander-in-chief sent for Talbot, and requested him to take charge of a combustible brig, to which he readily consented, though it was considered so hazardous an undertaking that it was with great difficulty that others could be procured to command the rest. John Thomas, Talbot's ensign, followed his example, and took charge of a second, and was burned to death in the flames of his vessel.

Talbot did not receive orders to execute the design of his ship, until three of the British ships of war moved up the North River, seven miles above the city. In the night preceding the battle of Haerlem, he received directions to run down upon the ships of war in the North River, and destroy them, if possible, which were promptly attempted to be put in execution an hour before daylight, by getting the fire ship under way, and running down and boarding the Asia on her starboard bow, when he set fire to her, and, with the greatest difficulty, made his escape through the flames into the boat, where his men had been placed to take him off. The fire ship was grappled to the Asia for some time; but, at length, by the activity, address, and intrepidity of British seamen, was disengaged, so that the Asia was not burned.. But the attempt threw the ship's crew into such confusion, and alarmed them so much, that all the ships of war and their attendants in the North River cut and ran down to their old station, below the city. The morning after this, the battle of Haerlem was fought, and as the enemy had not those ships to cover their left flank, as had been intended, Washington gained the advantage of that day. After leaving the fire ship, Talbot made his escape to the Jersey shore in a boat, receiving the fire of all the ships as he passed them. In escaping through the flames, his clothes were all burned, and his body, too, to that degree that he did not see the light for fourteen days. Congress, on a representation of this service, thought proper to grant him a commission as major in the army of the United States, and to make him a grant of a sum of money as a compensation for the clothes which were burned on his back. Rapid promotions and splendid rewards were not so easily obtained in those days, you see, as they have been in some instances of late years.

At the latter end of the siege of Fort Mifflin, on Mud Island, which was always allowed to have been well defended, Talbot was second in command, and, in the afternoon previous to the evening of its evacuation, when the cannonade and fire of musketry were very severe, he received a musket ball through his left wrist, the pain of which must have been to most men insupportable; he bound it up, and continued at his post till sunset, when he was shot down by another ball, which entered near his left hip, and yet remains in his left groin.

In 1778, at the battle of Rhode Island, under General Sullivan, he commanded in the light advanced corps, and commenced the action of that day in person; and such was his conduct during the battle, and activity in procuring boats for landing the army on the island, previous to the battle, that Sullivan mentioned him very honorably to Congress in the communication of the events of that expedition.

In the same year, after the expedition before alluded to, the British stationed a large galley in the passage between Rhode Island and the main, mounting eight twelve-pounders, which cannon had been taken out of the Flora frigate, that was sunk in the harbor, and were marked with her name. As this galley totally stopped all supplies for the army by water, and prevented all our navigation from Providence and Taunton rivers, which was very considerable, and annoyed all vessels bound to those places, Talbot determined to remove her, if possible, and accordingly requested of General Sullivan, who commanded the army, fifty men to be drafted for the purpose. The General, after some hesitation, complied. Talbot embarked these on board a small sloop at Providence, called the Hawk, which mounted only two three-pounders, cut away the boarding nettings, drove the enemy from their quarters, and took possession, sword in hand, of the galley, which was commanded by a British lieutenant of the navy with forty-eight men. After this, Talbot weighed her anchors, ran out of the harbor, and carried her safe to Connecticut, where he landed the prisoners before dark the next day. For this service, the legislature of Rhode Island passed a law that a sword should be presented to him at the expense of that State, and Congress thought proper, as a reward for the same service, to promote him to the rank, and to give him a commission, of Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of the United States. The British never posted any other armed vessel in the passage, which remained open and free ever after.

Some time after this, Talbot made arrangements, and sailed twice from Providence with three hundred men, on board a large merchant ship, mounted on a stage above her deck, for the purpose of boarding a sixty-four gun ship, that lay in the bay. But the wind at both times failed him, and it became so calm that he was obliged to return without effecting his purpose. As the enemy always got information of his movements, they were,

after this, so much afraid of being boarded, that they took a regiment on board from the Island, and kept them until they learned that his plan was laid aside.

In 1779, Congress directed General Gates, who succeeded General Sullivan, to provide an armed vessel for the protection of the bays and coast about Rhode Island. Accordingly, a sloop was equipped, named the Argo, mounting ten six-pounders; but as this sloop, when equipped, could not be manned, General Gates requested Talbot to take the command of her, as he was at that time popular with the seamen. At first he declined, because the command of a small sloop was not equal to that which a lieutenant-colonel ought to expect. But he was, at length, prevailed on by the General, as it was desirable to have the sloop manned. General Gates can certify the most important services performed by the Argo, while under his command. The number of cannon which he took in the several prizes, is said to have amounted to ninety-six, twenty of them twelve-pounders, the rest sixes and fours. Some of the privateers he took were double his own force, and all of them of superior force. In a battle fought with the privateer ship Dragon, of fourteen guns, which continued four hours and a half, with great vigor on both sides, the ship did not surrender until her main-mast was shot away just above the deck, and tumbled into the sea. In this battle he had twenty-one men killed and wounded, and, when the enemy surrendered, the Argo was on the point of sinking, the water in her hold being above the gun-room floor.

Congress, as a reward for his services in this action, and five others, fought in the Argo, some of them not much less severe, thought proper to appoint him a captain in the navy; for, while he commanded the Argo, he was furnished with no other than a lieutenant-colonel's commission. Thus I have given some intimations of the principles and facts, which I have taken pains to collect, on which I have acted in giving Talbot a commission, *to take rank from the day of his appointment as a captain in the navy, in* 1794, which words, here underscored, I pray you to insert in his commission in your office, as they are the only alteration I have made in it.

After all, human events are all uncertain. Truxtun may resign, which I sincerely hope he will not, and, upon my honor, I think he ought not, and Talbot may be unfortunate; conse-

quent censures will, probably, be freely cast upon me. I am prepared to meet them, let them come as thick as they may. However I may regret them, I shall never repent of the measure that produced them, because it has been the result of mature deliberation, impartial consideration of the whole subject, and conscientious opinion that it is right.

After a detention of nine days by contrary winds, the Constitution took the advantage of a brisk breeze, and went out of the harbor and out of sight this forenoon, making a beautiful and noble figure amidst the joy and good wishes of many thousands of good federalists.[1]

I have the honor, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. Although this letter is committed to your discretion, prudence will dictate that some parts of it be considered as confidential.

[1] Mr. Stoddert replied to this letter; —

"The alteration directed shall be made in the register of Captain Talbot's commission; and, I beg leave to add, without any regrets arising from my opinion on that subject being overruled. I never doubted that Talbot had merit equal to any man in our service, &c., &c. I believe the world will think the determination a proper one. It shall not be my fault, if any inconvenience to the service is produced by it."

APPENDIX.

(A.)

No. I.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.[1]

The Hague, 1 July, 1798.

Dear Sir, — The papers, some of which I have received as late as 8th May, and one of 26th May, have, after so long a pause of uncertainty, thrown me into a tumult of feelings, almost to tears. I see, with a pride sustained by active domestic sources of greatness, the rising energies of America spreading over that surface of the public mind which reflection had matured, into a mass of stability, fit to support all the passions that are generous and lofty. Among the causes of exultation, the addresses are certainly all important. I circulate them here, and they open the eyes of even the wilful as to the long-told tale and inveterate error, that the people and the Executive are at variance. The prospects which these things open upon this government, give them infinite solicitude. Their ally is deaf to their sufferings, and, if war openly comes on, I verily believe they do not know whether they are to share in it or not. They will struggle, complain, argue, and remonstrate against joining France, both because they hate her and rejoice at our energy, and because it will put almost a last stroke to their commerce, perhaps colonies. Knowing the absolute power of France over all their means, and foreseeing a period when the question might be decided against their neutrality respecting the United States, all my wishes have been bent towards the preparation of a state of things internally here, that might eventually drive the French out of this country. In this wish, the theories of the old and the new governments are not at all taken into view, nor are their merits among the motives I have felt to do this; it is my duty which makes it becoming in me, Sir, to tell you I have conversed with some of the important men among the moderates in the month of May. As soon as I knew very secretly that they intended through General Daendels to overturn the

[1] It is material to an accurate knowledge of events during this critical period, to record the date of reception of these letters. This and the succeeding one were received by Mr. Adams at Quincy, on the 9th of October, 1798. Being written partly in the cipher of the Department of State, of which Mr. A. had no key, he sent them on the 10th to Philadelphia to be deciphered, with a charge to Mr. Pickering to "keep their contents within his own bosom." Mr. P. returned them deciphered on the 18th, with a letter, speaking of the first as "in different points of view, very interesting." The effect on Mr. Adams's own mind is expressed in his reply, 29th October, 1798, page 615.

Directory and Councils, if they could get the leave of France, I discovered that their object ultimately was to get possession of power, new organize the whole country in its public men, and, if possible, in any lucky concurrence of external things, liberate the country from the French, whom they abhor. I wrote to Mr. King, stating the views to which I thought these men, if successful in oversetting the usurpers of 22d January, might be brought. My object in writing was this. In all their solicitude against France, the principal obstruction to a radical concert was the fear of the interference of Great Britain to restore the Stadtholder. That fear removed, and external events concurring, [and they seemed coming, as war on the Rhine, internal convulsions in France, ruptures in Italy] they seemed to be in a fair course to even success. I stated to him that, while the parties here (and one hundred and fifty thousand men voted for the Constitution) were afraid of this interference, all their measures for independence would be checked, and they would remain absolutely French; that if great Britain could by some means settle that fear, and the moderates succeeded (as they did on the 12th June), and other events that seemed probable occurred, the government which would be formed among the moderates, would do all in their power to so prepare things that they might successfully avail themselves of opportunity. My letters arrived safely, and nothing was hazarded on my part.

On the 22d of May, I was called upon by the second man in the party. A conversation the preceding evening at a ball of the French minister was the proximate cause, for I had enjoyed with him some confidential conversations before. In this interview, this gentleman, after telling me that he wished to converse fully with me in confidence, and that what I should hear from him should not go further than to you, Sir, the Secretary of State, and Mr. King, opened himself fully. He told me that if Daendels succeeded (he went the 17th at night) they meant to overturn the present men, whom he represented as peculators, and as men who exhausted every thing in enormous bribes, to arrange their internal affairs, and the first moment in their power to drive out the French; that opportunities would occur in the war, if it was renewed, and that they meant to embroil parties in France, if there was a chance of convulsion there, but that the great obstacle was the temper of England towards them; that this apprehension once settled by a secret understanding, they could join her and the United States against France; that this understanding ought to take place soon, because they would then work all their means to the grand object from the start of the new administration, which he hoped would be formed in a little time. I then read to him part of my letter to Mr. King from a press-copy, on this subject. He said that was all he wished. In many parts of his conversation he was excessively moved by mournful and indignant feelings. I told him I should write to Mr. King. That we were so distant, I did not see the necessity of writing to the President. You will see, Sir, that I have not overrated this interview, when I tell you that the gentleman was the name which you will find at the bottom of this page.* His name I have not informed Mr. King of, nor any one.

* To enable you, Sir, to burn the name, I have put it on a piece of paper, separate. [It was Admiral de Winter.]

Could this nation be once roused, and drive the French out, the spirit of revolt from her would spread over all the affiliated countries, and the most important events succeed. As to the restoration of the Stadtholder, that is in my mind a secondary consideration, and for themselves; and it is not improbable that his restoration would take place. The expulsion of the French must be the groundwork of every measure, whether for his restoration, or any thing else, and would be highly important to the United States.

I mention this to you, Sir, because I think it my duty to tell you every thing of consequence, which I cannot and ought not to trust to the inspection of so many men (above a hundred), who claim the privilege of inspecting the despatches in the office, and I think it important enough to trouble you with, because it is a likeness of the men now in power, and, I believe, a true view of their wishes. But Great Britain will not give up the Stadtholder. I do not know that she need. The question, however, is, whether she would see this whole country eventually divided by France, or in the full possession of France, or so placed as that it might either have a constitution different from its old form, and probably also the Stadtholder, taking him back upon terms of their own after the French should be dispossessed, and without her interference. Prussia would take care also of this restoration, it is probable, though now she abandons all her friends, and Great Britain, by her project last summer, in fact gave him up.

I apprehend that the war will break out again. We know nothing of Bonaparte and his fleet, that can be deemed authentic, except that they are near Malta. The rupture between Genoa and the court of Turin is a thing intended by our great ally, and will lead to the speedy downfall of Sardinia, who, in the latter end of April, actually set on foot a negotiation at Paris to obtain a handsome retreat, if it was the declared intention of France to revolutionize his country. France tries to avoid such appearances with an ally, and though a miserable substitute for a manly and noble resistance, yet it had some policy in it, for it brought her to renounce openly her design, and enabled him to defeat the insurgents, who had been stimulated by France, and who for a month thought themselves deserted. It is singular, but he will join France, if war comes on with the Emperor. Such is his abject state, living with a certainty of being cut up, if the French republic exists a year.

Some part of the subject of this letter, which will be, I fear, Sir, very toilsome to you, may require a vindication. My own opinion is, that the evil ones of the world have a decided superiority over the good, by that jacobinical and secret intrigue, by which vast plots are ripened in the dark, and because the good will not go into the dark to work. I believe that an enemy is to be opposed in the recesses of the mine, which is ready to heave into air the fortress, as well as on the open plain in broad day, and that their mode of fighting must furnish the model by which the fashion of resistance is to be adopted. In fact, Sir, that a diplomat of strict honor, and with views the most correct, in the present scenes in Europe, must counterwork in the manner that they work. That to resist this horrible illuminism, this darkness visible, he must himself, if possible, be an *illuminé*. I submit this delicate question to you, Sir, who have yourself worked in the midst of difficulties the greatest. I trust that I feel the full force of the truth that there is something in honest intentions, and in true simplicity

of design, that without cunning excels it; yet the experience at this day of every horrible scene that has occurred for ten years past, from the first step of revolution to the last, convinces me that this truth is applicable in sound interpretation to the principles and intentions of a system, and that though bad means are not sanctified by a good end, yet that no good means will equal bad means, conducted by immense combination, without they are combined and excited in a manner resembling that in which the bad are. This for my vindication, should I have appeared to you to be doing something secretly, which I have mentioned in this letter.

I have the pleasure to inform you that Mr. Adams was well on 23d June. I have the honor to be, with my felicitations among the crowd who address you, and the most sincere respect and most perfect esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

W. V. Murray.

No. II.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

The Hague, 17 July, 1798.

Dear Sir, — In a late despatch in June to the Secretary of State, I mentioned Mr. Pichon, late Secretary to Genet and Fauchet, last a Secretary in the bureau of foreign affairs, on the American side of the office, at Paris, and now French Secretary of legation here. I promised this gentleman in the third interview, about three weeks since (for I wished to make him talk freely, knowing that his opinions have helped to mislead the French government), that his name should not be mentioned in any way that might be known to the world, at his own request. Since that I have not seen him till to-day. I this morning received a note from him, informing me that he had some intelligence to communicate exceedingly interesting to both of us, and wished an hour to be named. I gave him the time. Before the hour (one), the Chargé des Affaires, Champigny, drove up, and was with me, loosely talking about Rastadt, and the war which is now again bursting forth between France and Germany. After his departure, the visit as to time being perfectly out of course, Mr. Pichon came.

For a fortnight before I had expected that they would probably attempt to use me as a vehicle of overtures to be made to the government, for the purpose of distracting and dividing, and of reviving that hope which has so much been our disease. I am not much out in my expectations. Mr. Pichon, after some time, detailed to me the substance of the inclosed paper as intelligence respecting Mr. Gerry, lamenting the unhappy quarrel, &c., &c., and endeavoring to predispose me to Mr. Talleyrand, assuring me that he was solicitous for accommodation. The conversation was long, and made up, on my part, of the gross insults which we had too long borne, and the injustice which we had suffered, and of the spirit which now animates the councils and the nation of America, and the current of opinions that bore down every art and obstacle; on his part, of conceding to much I said, of lamenting the rest, of praises of the instructions, for their profound wisdom, and conciliatory and magnanimous tone. In fine, I

considered this interview as probably bringing into motion part of their plan respecting my humble self. In about two hours, he told me that he had, as he before informed me, translated the instructions which I lent to him, sent them to Mr. Talleyrand with remarks, and had this morning received Mr. Talleyrand's answer, which, if I pleased, he would read. It was, he said, a copy. I perceived it was in Mr. Pickon's own hand, which I know. After his reading of it, and tracing with much concern the point in which all negotiation must stop, he put it into my hands. I asked him if I might keep it, because I could not read French as fluently as he repeated it. He assented. This was probably also what he wished. I told him that we were now armed and arming; that the bills for the *sortie* of our cruisers and for suspension of intercourse, which I had newspaper copies of in my pocket, and which I lent to him, had passed without debate or opposition, so mature was the public mind on these points; that I regretted Mr. Gerry's stay at Paris, because, I added, that this might divide the public mind as to the chance of honorable accommodation, and, of course, might delay those vigorous measures which became our government after such moderation, lest their patience might be misconstrued, as the internal parties of America had been; that we were so very far off, it was now impossible for us to be kept in a wavering state, and that, from the decided tone of the government, supported throughout by the nation, it would be no very easy matter; that the conduct of government and the people, notwithstanding Mr. Gerry's stay, was a proof that nothing now but acts of justice could restore harmony; that as to the mode, I was no judge; that my government could alone judge.

I carefully avoided dropping a word that, in the most distant manner, held up an idea of communicating this paper, or of treating it in any way but as an affair of mere conversation and for my private perusal. Nothing was said to prevent my communicating it. He repeated his wishes, that whatever had passed might not reach the public. I assured him it should not; that I remembered my promise to him; that with him I lamented the state into which the two nations appeared approaching, but saw no way out of it at present; that you had done all that became the dignity and independence which you watched over; that I personally had the honor of knowing the perfect sincerity of your heart upon the endeavor to adjust, but that I was no judge of the mode to be pursued, and that I hoped we should still be armed and prepared, and protect our commerce by defensive measures. He said we were right in placing every thing in a state of defence, and of protecting our commerce, and of preventing their or any privateers from molesting our waters and limits. But his regret was that, just as things began to take a turn, such as he knew Mr. Talleyrand wished, there should be nobody at Paris to treat. I again recurred to the patience of the envoys, and the impropriety (so I thought it) of Mr. Gerry's stay. He recurred then to the powers, "joint and several," and said that our government broke off the negotiation, though a man appointed by it, Mr. Gerry, was competent to treat, and on the spot, before it knew the result. I then called his recollection to Mr. Talleyrand's note in March, which begins by criminating the American government, charging insincerity, and absolutely dismissing the majority of the envoys, though all there, when once in Paris, were alone one commission; and that "joint and several" meant to guard against contingencies of death in any one or more in so distant a scene and voyage.

As I saw his drift was to lead me into such opinions as might induce me to write to government, that a new expectation might be excited, the motive of which, I do not hesitate to declare, I believe to be merely to divide and bewilder, and to relax our energy, and as I wished to show him that I had no hopes myself of adjustment, — on his lamenting the present crisis, and wishing that it could yet be averted, I observed to him that while I regretted that this crisis was imposed upon us in defence of our honor, independence, and commercial interests, I saw no means, in the present state of things, by which this could be accomplished; that his government ought to have reflected, last March, upon one thing in particular, which would always, if not attended to, render after-thought embarrassing, if not useless, in any nation in Europe that had a delicate negotiation with America. It was the distance of America (U. S.) from France. That when a negotiation so situated had been, after mature efforts on our part, broken off, and the ministers gone, it was not possible to intimate any fresh ideas to the American government, as they could to any government in Europe, by couriers in ten days, and hence a radical breach of negotiation with America must, from the policy of America arising from that distance, always produce those decisive measures there, which had from self-preservation been lately adopted; that the moment it was announced by you, Sir, that all hopes had ceased, the government and nation rose up to a point infinitely beyond the lethargy of hope, and took ground that changed the subject-matter for negotiation; that the United States had not declared war that I knew of, but that she had taken her ground, &c., &c. He talked about parties; that France could not hurt us, but that our parties might. I told him that that was the error which could not be explained, if facts, acts, and laws, had not already explained it.

Permit me now, Sir, shortly to state what I believe to be the real object of this whole interview. France, alarmed at our attitude, war bursting out again, wishing to amuse America with a new chime of bells, has fixed on this Secretary, because he knew me in Philadelphia, as the instrument to try the pulse, and me as the vehicle of her wretched policy. Nothing has ever come from me to lead her to suppose that I am her man — that much, at least, I may permit myself to boast to you, Sir — but still she thinks that on that account she could get me into an informal negotiation, and impose upon me so far as to credit these airs of tenderness, and induce me by these means to hazard a few hopes in favor of amicable adjustment, that two opinions might yet rise in the United States, and that, at all events, some ground would be prepared for the impressions which she trusts Mr. Gerry may make on his return, if nothing more. Mr. Gerry acts wisely in resisting entering into negotiation, or affecting to assume the power; yet they and the French Americans at Paris will try every art to impress the public mind in America that every thing could be done by any man with powers; that Mr. Talleyrand has at last brought the Directory into a temper to treat, &c., &c.

I could not refuse a member of our corps an interview he asked for in a note; and, indeed, I was curious to see the advances of proud and conscious debility. As I was determined that I would not write at all upon the subject to government, nor to any one but to you, Sir, entirely for yourself, and he will never know that I have written, I would not give this visit any importance in Mr. Pichon's eyes by any hesitation, and I thought I might get something; what, I

did not know, nor expect precisely. I have not dared, at such a time, Sir, to step between your measures and their object, nor need you fear that I shall. If this affair takes a more formal attempt, I shall listen but to get what I can, and then declare myself incompetent, and that, having no power, and not having any security, I shall not dare to meddle nor to write to government upon the subject; that they are competent to acts of justice and sincerity without negotiation. I am well aware of the consequence of my doing any thing like listening to formal proposals without this declaration on my part, because it would lead them, perhaps, to write to America that great hopes were entertained of an amicable adjustment, and mention the overtures to which I should have listened.

The use, Sir, it has struck me, in this interview, is in this fact (if it be true that the copy is really from Mr. Talleyrand), that the sending of Mr. Pichon here is a measure of solicitude, for he is a useful and active Secretary on American affairs at Paris; and, above all, this interview and the letter of Mr. Talleyrand, and Mr. Pichon giving it to me, prove that they are deeply alarmed, that energetic measures have stunned them, and that the steady and dignified pursuit of them will attain their great end. From letters which I receive to-day from Paris, of the 11th, and from three other letters to two others, which I have heard read to-day, of the 12th, stating in fact the substance of the inclosed, and Mr. Talleyrand's advances, I have no doubt that they will exert themselves to show how amicable they are, how hasty we are; but I thank God, Sir, that nature has worked to her proper issues in America, and that these tricks will be straws against a storm.

It is my misfortune, Sir, to trouble you with long letters, and in a toilsome character. One thing more, Sir, and I cease to lengthen this. Believe me to be deeply impressed, first, with a sense of duty that shows me I have no right to meddle on this subject, and, secondly, that in sending the inclosed with my remarks, solely, Sir, to you, and to no other man in the world, I hazard no false inferences from what I do, no dangerous effects from the transmission, and that I do it to prove, should it be necessary, to you, that this mode of proceeding is among the arts which they will doubtless practice in various shapes, and that you ought to know the fact; as it will console you to have proof that, though they have no sincerity that can be depended on one moment, they are in some degree humbled. You will perceive, Sir, that I do not mention this even to the Secretary of State; for, in his office, some men go occasionally to read despatches, who might, from good or bad motives, use this paper to foolish or wicked ends.

General Joubert, who commands the French army here, was last night ordered to depart for Mayence. Hatry comes here, as the French expect to begin active and offensive operations against Germany. The negotiation at Seltz between Ex-Director Neufchateau and Count Cobenzel ended in heat; they separated hostilely even. The Congress at Rastadt, it is understood, must be by this time broken up, and the campaign is expected. While Germany has been dozing at Rastadt, the French have accomplished what a brilliant campaign could hardly have effected; for the papacy has been overturned, Switzerland possessed, the kingdom of Sardinia put into their hands, and Malta taken. Bonaparte, it is believed, must be on his route to Leghorn, if Nelson does not secure him. On the other hand, Switzerland is unquiet, and will seize any

moment favorable to resist; this country is wretched, and would, I believe, resist, if Great Britain would remove her fears. Her fears, however, are excited now by a suspicion that France may either throw her into departments, or partition her with Prussia, who, as far as I can learn, is not yet a party to the coalition.

The name which I lately had the honor to communicate in another long letter, on a separate piece of paper, was not put into any public despatch, because of my fears that it might somehow leak out, and would be rapidly borne here to the death of the person and of others. I beg you to excuse the laborious length of this letter, and of that, and to believe me to be, with the most perfect respect and attachment, &c.

W. V. MURRAY.

(Inclosed.)

C. M. TALLEYRAND TO M. PICHON.

21 Messidor, An. 6 (9 July 1798).

J'AI reçu, Citoyen, votre lettre du 8 de ce mois, avec la copie des instructions données au nom du Président des États Unis à les envoyés. Je suis surpris comme vous que leur conduite et leur mémoire du 28 Nivose, ayent cadré si peu avec cette pièce. Je n'y vois que deux clauses impératives, — ne permettre aucun secours pendant la guerre — n'éxiger et ne faire aucune soumission sur les procédés reprochés de part et d'autre. Des hommes vraiment concilians eussent levés ces difficultés.

Notre intention est toujours de mettre un terme à un état de choses si contraire aux intérêts des deux pays. Vous savez que le rapprochement eut été effectué de bonne heure, si des mesures irritantes de la part des États Unis n'eussent constamment suscité des obstacles. J'ai fait le 30 Prairéal à M. Gerry des propositions qui n'avaient été suspendues que par la connoissance des étranges communications de Philadelphie. Je lui ai successivement remis des notes sur chacune des questions de détail qui doivent être résolues. Je n'ai cessé de manifester le désir d'activer la négociation, et les doutes seules de M. Gerry sur la validité de ses pouvoirs ont entrainés des lenteurs. C'est au moment où je me flattais d'avoir fait des progrés, que le Directoire apprend de Philadelphie la publication d'un acte intitulé, "Acte tendant à protéger efficacement le commerce et les côtes des États Unis." Cette piece que vous verrez dans les papiers publics vous expliquera la sensation qu'elle a produite. C'est ainsi que d'incidens en incidens, et toujours par le fait du gouvernement des États Unis, les deux nations s'eloignent lorsqu'il paraît qu'elles vont se rapprocher. M. Gerry d'un autre côté n'avance rien. Il élude les discussions sur les notes que je lui remets; il persiste à retourner dans les États Unis, et laisse conjecturer qu'il n'attend aucune autorisation pour traiter définitivement. Je pense que si le gouvernement Américain a les intentions qu'il professe ostensiblement, il doit s'abstenir de toute provocation nouvelle, et envoyer un plénipotentiaire favorablement connu en France. Nous serons peut-être plutôt d'accord que les Anglais ne se l'imaginent.

No. 3.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.[1]

The Hague, 22 July, 1798.

Dear Sir, — I had this evening a visit from (the name is on a loose paper *). After informing me of the exertions of Mr. Schimmelpenninck and Admiral de Winter at Paris, the agents of this government, to recall France to a just respect for the commercial interests of this country, he told me, from a letter from the latter, which he showed me, that France had not commanded the commissary of Marine at Flushing to embargo our ships at that port, (there are none, I think, there,) though the embargo is certain all through the French ports; that this intelligence would please our government, because it promised some respect to trade in this country. He asked my opinion of some parts of the letter, which he read in French, as it was in Dutch, in which the Admiral mentions Mr. Talleyrand's solicitude to conciliate the United States. I told him not to rely a moment upon these professions, begging him on the contrary to bend all his force to show France that it is her interest to let Holland be at peace with the United States. He said that should be done, and had been endeavored; that they were absolutely ruined, if they should be in the war. I told him that I had written a few sheets on that question, which I would send him; which I shall do privately. Were it known to come from me, though not a treatise, it would work the other way with France.

The reason of my caution in folding up the name is because of what I shall now mention. He gradually led me to the subject of my letter to you, Sir, of 17th July,[2] in which I mention that a personage had called on me and proposed to me to write to Mr. King on the following proposition; namely, that if Great Britain would declare that she would not interfere with the internal government here, they (his party) would drive the French out of the country, provided that the war that was probable were renewed and any chance presented itself. He spoke explicitly of the name which I mentioned, connected with the interview in May, and which I find certainly that I have not overrated in mentioning it, Sir, to you. After some time he told me I need not conceal any thing on that subject, that he knew all, and was a party to the plan, and then named one other, a man of the very first talents, I think, in this country, and a man of high and excellent principles, and said, we all are of the same views. I then spoke with absolute freedom to him, and told him what I had written to Mr. King, and that I had communicated to you, Sir, in confidence, even the name. He seemed a little alarmed. I told him it would be perfectly safe with you, and that it was on a loose paper, and that in case of accidents, as death, it would still be sacred. He avowed the highest respect for you, and mentioned that his friends (the moderates, many of whom had the pleasure of knowing you personally) were much attached to you. I told him that not having seen the person with whom I had the interview in May since, I could not

* Spoors, President of the Directory.

1 This letter was transmitted by Mr. Pickering in a letter dated 19th October, two days after Nos. 1 and 2 had been sent deciphered.

2 Mr. Murray mistakes the date. It was his letter of the 1st.

communicate the result of my correspondence, but that I now would, to him; and told him that I suspected that Great Britain would not give the pledge required. He at last said he thought she might yet, if a fair occasion offered. In fact, Sir, I now know that the men who overturned the Directory on the 12th June, did it partly with this view, and principally. They have, with some hazard, liberated the arrested members of 22d January, in doing which they risked the suspicions of France; but they have so managed as to have her consent and yet her confidence. Tremendous will be the blow, if she discover a thread of this affair!

I hear nothing more from Mr. Pichon. Mr. Gerry is yet at Paris, and great pains are taken to circulate into merchants' counting houses here information pretended to be drawn from him, that if he had power he could treat to advantage. In the mean time *no act* on their part assures us of sincerity; on the contrary, every act of government is a contradiction to this sort of news, namely, a very strict embargo on our vessels in all the French ports, since about the 10th instant, when from private intelligence I heard of it, by letters of the 9th from Paris.

I would pray, Sir, for every gentleness towards this nation, consistent with the honor of the American government. They are, government and all, charmed with our spirit and energy, and, in fact, consider it secretly as a common cause, in which they are interested that we should succeed.

I have requested Mr. Bourne to give notice of the law for suspending intercourse, though I am not officially informed. If I find that my intelligence, that the bill passed 1st June, is not a law, and it came to me through various channels that it is a law, I shall take on myself the mistake by publishing notice that the unofficial intelligence (which I now believe still to be true) is premature, so as to prevent any consequences from Mr. Bourne's notice.

I have the honor to be, &c.

W. V. MURRAY.

P. S. 23 July. I have just received letters from several correspondents, which lead me to doubt whether the bill for suspending intercourse be passed into a law; and have written to Mr. Bourne to stop the notice. That measure I resolved on, *after a belief that it had passed*, because of the endeavors made here and from Paris to lead our trade into a disbelief of the Embargo, which I knew had taken place in the French ports, and because some vessels here of the United States wished to go both to France and her islands.

No. 4.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.[1]

The Hague, 3 August, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have the honor to inclose you a duplicate, and to inform you that the same language has been held to me since, and that this government

[1] A portion of this letter has never been deciphered. Neither is there any record of its date of reception. Probably it was about the middle of November, before Mr. Adams left Quincy.

have assured me of their conviction that the letter inclosed in this Leyden paper, marked x, may be considered as evidence of an amicable disposition,[1] as they say they have taken pains to ascertain that point from motives of self-interest. These motives I believe, Sir, 574. 1570. them. I do not believe in 536 since 539. 1175 of this letter. Mr. Gerry's answer I have not yet seen. Mr. Talleyrand's reply to it I have in manuscript, in the same way, as the inclosed may show. The *answer*, I hear, demanded a retraction of the *arrêtés* against our trade. The reply avoids all of that irritating language which is scattered with a supercilious air in the letter, though in a degree and manner more humble, and it announces an amicable spirit, a determination to remain tranquil, and that orders had been given to the privateers in the West Indies to act *within the limits of the laws*. This order Mr. T. considers as a pledge of amity, without saying any thing of the *laws* themselves. It renounces all demands of loans, and assures Mr. Gerry of a disposition to treat on fair terms, in a manner the most direct, and in a tone infinitely below any thing which they have used to any nation. All this I 526 as merely arts hoping to 709. 240. negotiation to 759. 977. your 1152. 659. 924 and 839. 955. with England. Their privateers in the mean time are, I understand, to act as usual in Europe against us, because they do so against the vessels of other nations.

I hear that Mr. Gerry has left Paris for America. From the tenor of these letters, I presume that the French consider him as charged to deliver them and perhaps more. It is because I presume that he does not so consider himself, that I trouble you, Sir, with this communication, that you may be as early as possible apprised of these letters which I 526. 1467. as a public mode of 948. 712. 1182. Pichon admits that, as a proof of their sincerity, an American war would be highly unpopular in France; and that the colonies are in danger, if it come on. I stated the preference which you would give to great and solid *acts* of justice rather than to promises of amity, and a course of proceeding in which they twice had the offer of the hand of amity.

Letters will come from Paris to America, as they do hither, full of absolute falsities, of demands by Mr. G. and concessions on their part. Happening to have seen the 1137. 600. of M. Talleyrand, I have been enabled to contradict part of the misstatements.

The haste in which I am obliged to write I beg you, Sir, to accept as some apology for the very great freedom in blots, &c.

W. V. Murray.

[1] Inclosed with this came a number of the *Nouvelles Politiques*, of the 3d of August, published at Leyden, containing the letter of M. Talleyrand to Mr. Gerry, of the 24 Messidor (12 July), which had been published at Paris on the 28th, with introductory remarks betraying a sense that the French government had gone too far in permitting the negotiation to be broken off. The following passage is underlined in ink; —

"Il est certain, que notre gouvernement paroît avoir mis autant d'empressement à ouvrir des négociations amicales avec le troisième Envoyé Américain, qu'il a témoigné d'indifference, ou même de froideur, avant le départ de ses deux collègues, Messrs. Pinckney et Marshall."

No. 5.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

The Hague, 20 August, 1798.

Dear Sir, —[1] . . . . . .

The inclosed paper was given to me this morning by Mr. Vander Goes, the Minister of foreign affairs. It is authentic, though not authenticated, and proves that the Dutch minister at Paris has acted as I stated lately to the Secretary of State. He made a verbal application to know if his government could not be instrumental in acting as the intermediary between the United States and France, now that all diplomatic communication had ended. In a day or two after, Mr. Talleyrand gave him the inclosed *written* answer. This proves a solicitude to which the energy of the American government, sustained by union among the people, has given birth. It will be in the power of the government to take a wide survey of the question, and to make a very dignified use of the subject-matter of this paper. The subject-matter has been published in the papers here. This proceeded, I believe, from France.[2]

I have the honor to be, &c.

W. V. Murray.

(Inclosed.)

COMMUNICATION CONFIDENTIELLE.

Le Ministre des relations extérieures a communiqué officiellement au ministre Batave, Schimmelpenninck, que le Directoire de la République Française a reçu avec satisfaction l'offre de mediation entre la République et les États Unis. Le Ministre des relations extérieures ajoute à cette communication que le Directoire a témoigné récemment, de la manière la plus éclatante, ses dispositions conciliatoires; qu'il ne croyait pas qu'elles seroient plus longtemps méconnues à Philadelphie; et qu'il attendait que l'opinion éclairée des Américains, répondant aux voeux qu'il a manifesté, provoqueroit à son tour une explication définitive et des arrangemens convenables.

No. 6.

WILLIAM VANS MURRAY TO JOHN ADAMS.[3]

The Hague, 7 October, 1798.

Dear Sir, — The inclosed is from M. Talleyrand to M. Pichon, who left this place the 24th September for Paris. In many interviews which this gentleman

[1] The first portion of this letter relates to a matter of no public interest.

[2] Indorsed on the cover of this letter in the handwriting of Mr. Adams.
"Received from the post Jan. 21, 1799."
The reason why this date is important may be gathered by comparing the charge of Mr. Pickering, based upon Mr. Adams's implied approbation of all the sentiments of his report of the 18th of the same month. See Pickering's *Review*, p. 136.

[3] There is no date of reception marked on this letter; but it must have been received by the early part of February, as the inclosure, which accompanied it, made the basis of the nomination of Mr. Murray to the Senate on the 18th of that month. Mr. Joel Barlow's

sought with me, with much solicitude, I had repelled the idea that "the assurances" declared by you, Sir, in your message in June, had been given in any of Mr. Talleyrand's letters that I had seen. To this I added, among many other remarks, that nothing but a formal and explicit assurance of respectful reception, worthy the minister of a free, independent, and powerful nation, would, in my opinion, as an unauthorized individual, be considered by you, Sir, as "the assurances," which you had spoken of; that I did not know any thing of the intentions of government in the future, but that it was an error in his government to flatter itself with the idea that you would accept assurances by implication, or any of any sort which were blended with any kind of indication of the political complexion of envoys, or any advice or hint upon the choice. That I did not know whether, if assurances were given, they would produce negotiation; but that, without them, there would be no negotiation certainly. That "the assurances," if given, would not be a favor, but only an assurance that rights, which had been twice refused, should be enjoyed. That an explicit declaration could never be necessary upon such a point, except in cases where the right had been expressly refused. That this right, implied among all equal powers, had been twice expressly denied, and that, of course, an explicit declaration announcing it, became necessary to the dignity of the American government and nation.

He appeared, at last, to fall in with these ideas; and in the next interview, which was the second week in September, he told me he had stated my remarks to Mr. Talleyrand, but that he did not see *how* this declaration could be made, to whom, and through whom. I told him that I would communicate to you, Sir, any such declaration, if formally and officially made, though I was unauthorized to open my lips on the subject, and knew that it was taking on myself great hazard, and incurring a risk of being open to the imputation of *meddling* at such a crisis.

Before he went away from the Hague, it struck me I ought to guard myself by a written note on the point of being *unauthorized*. I therefore wrote the inclosed, with the remarks respecting "the assurances." Unless the purity and disinterestedness of my motives are appreciated by you, Sir, I shall consider these informal endeavors to coöperate in what I thought to be your plan and consistent with your policy, as the greatest errors of my life! I thought that some point, honorable to the government over which you preside, might be gained, nothing hazarded.

Before Mr. Pichon went to Paris, he told me that he daily expected an answer upon the points of our conversation on the 7th and 8th instant (September); namely, on "the assurances." To-night I received from the hands of the French military postmaster here the original of the inclosed, under cover from one signed by Mr. Pichon in which he says, this, from the Minister, Mr. Talleyrand, is the one which he waited some days for here, and which crossed him on the road, and was sent back to Paris, whence he sends it to me to be confidentially mentioned to you, Sir. The mysteriousness of concealing these conversations and communications even from the *chargé des affaires* here, is unaccountable to me,

letter from Paris, dated five days earlier, is recorded as received by General Washington on the last day of January. With these lights, it is amusing to observe the extent to which party spirit drove Mr. Jefferson from the truth, in his conjectures as to the motives in making that nomination. See his letter to James Madison. Randolph's *Jefferson*, vol. iii. p. 423. Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. p. 398.

unless it has arisen from, first, the peculiar origin of these conversations and communications, and, secondly, from their pride. Mr. Pichon, I understood from himself, had these in view when he was sent here; for he told me at the Spanish minister's, "that *his being sent here*, and Mr. la Forest's being entirely given to Mr. Talleyrand, and the American dispute having been put altogether into Mr. Talleyrand's management lately, were among the *proofs* of the intentions of his government to settle amicably." He speaks English well; I speak French badly, and am thus not qualified for long and rapid conversations on important subjects in that language. He has more talents and knowledge, particularly on American affairs, than the present *chargé*, who speaks a little English, and who has the character of an *enragé*. Secondly, their pride is concerned in concealment, unless these indirect measures should procure what they aim at, a new negotiation. On the last idea I have urged that the declaration must be as public as the two former refusals, and as solemn as your message.

The inclosed, then, Sir, is sent to you such as it is! It is not *the* declaration; it is from the minister of exterior relations of France to the Secretary of French legation. Such as it is, I feel it my duty to inclose it, with this exposition, to you in a private letter. Taken with other things it may perhaps throw some light, it cannot throw any shade, I hope, over the present lustre of the public mind, warm, and burning as it does, with a holy flame. If it be at all useful, I shall rejoice. It does not strike me, on mature reflection, as being in any event, either in war or in negotiation, capable of doing mischief, because, Sir, to you only, and to Colonel Pickering, in private letters, have I stated these things, in America; and to Mr. Adams, at Berlin, pretty fully the substance of my informal proceedings, and to Mr. King, a few hints in strict confidence, in Europe. I enjoy great pleasure in having received from Mr. Adams a concurrence of opinions on the points which I have stated to him on this subject.

I am sensible that I run some hazard in thus communicating to you, Sir, such things; but I thought that you would on the whole wish to know all that I could collect, and in *the manner* that I have taken the liberty of *privately* communicating it.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c., &c.

W. V. Murray.

(Inclosed.)

M. TALLEYRAND TO M. PICHON.

Liberté. (Seal of France.) *Égalité.*

Paris, le 7 Vendemiaire de l'an 7 de la République Française, une et indivisible.

Relations extérieures. 3e division. Nota: L'ordre de la correspondance exige que la réponse relate le

Le Ministre des relations extérieures au citoyen Pichon, Secrétaire de légation de la république française, près de la république Batave.

J'ai reçu successivement, Citoyen, vos lettres du 22 et 27 Fructidor.[2] Elles me donnent lieu d'être de plus en plus satisfait du

[1] It is due to Mr. Murray to say that the language of all these letters may suffer from imperfect and perhaps mistaken deciphering.

[2] 8th and 13th September.

No. de la division ci-dessus indiquée.

parti que vous avez pris de me rendre compte de vos conversations avec M. Murray. Ces conversations, d'abord purement amicales, ont pris un caractère par l'approbation que je vous ai transmise le 11 Fructidor. Je ne regrète pas que vous ayez confié une copie de ma lettre à l'honneur de M. Murray. Cette pièce, qui n'etait destinée que pour vous seul, ne contient rien qui ne soit conforme à la pensée du gouvernement. Je suis intimement convaincu, que si une fois les explications s'établissent avec confiance entre les deux cabinets, l'irritation cessera, une foule de mal-entendus disparaitront, et les nœuds de l'amitié se resserreront d'autant plus solidement, que de part et d'autre on reconnaîtra la main qui a voulu les dissoudre.

Mais je ne vous cache pas que vos lettres des 2 et 3 Vendemiaire, que je reçois à l'instant, me surprennent beaucoup. Ce dont M. Murray doute encore, a été déclaré très explicitement avant même que le message du Président au congrès du 3 Messidor[1] dernier, fut connu en France. Je l'avais écrit à M. Gerry, notamment le 24 Messidor et 4 Thermidor; je le lui ai répété avant son départ. Un paragraphe entier de la lettre que vous avez reçu de moi en date du 11 Fructidor, et dont la copie est entre les mains de Mr. Murray, est consacré à développer davantage la détermination fixe du gouvernement français. D'après ces bases, vous avez eu raison d'avancer que tout plénipotentiaire que le gouvernement des États Unis enverra en France, pour terminer les différends qui subsistent entre les deux pays, serait incontestablement reçu avec les égards dûs au représentant d'une nation libre, indépendante, et puissante.[2]

Je ne puis me persuader, Citoyen, que le gouvernement Américain ait besoin de déclarations ultérieures de notre part pour se déterminer à prendre, afin de renouer les négociations, les mesures que lui suggèrera son désir d'acheminer les différends vers un terme pacifique. Si des mal-entendus de part et d'autre, ont empêché les explications, qui ont eu lieu, d'arriver à ce terme, il faut croire que ces mal-entendus dissipés, rien n'opposera désormais d'obstacles aux dispositions réciproques. Les instructions du Président à ses envoyés à Paris, dont je n'ai eu connoissance que par la copie que vous en a remis M. Murray, et que j'ai reçu le 21 Messidor,[3] annoncent, si elles contiennent toute la pensée du gouvernement Américain, des dispositions qui n'ont pu qu'ajouter à celles où a toujours été le Directoire; et malgré les actes ultérieures de ce gouvernement, malgré les mesures irritantes et presque hostiles, auxquelles il s'est porté, le Directoire a montré qu'il persistait dans les sentimens qui sont consignés, tant dans ma correspondance avec M. Gerry, que dans la lettre que je vous ai écrite le 11 Fructidor, et que j'ai répétés plus haut, d'une manière on ne peut plus explicite. Portez donc, Citoyen, à Mr. Murray ces expressions positives, pour le convaincre de notre sincérité, et engagez le à les transmettre à son gouvernement.

Je présume, Citoyen, que cette lettre vous trouvera à la Haye. Dans le cas contraire, je demande qu'elle vous soit renvoyée à Paris.

Salut et Fraternité.

Ch. Mau. Talleyrand.

[1] 21st June.
[2] A literal translation of Mr. Adams's noted declaration of the 21st of June, 1798.
[3] 9th July.

END OF VOLUME VIII.

Dom. Coll. W.

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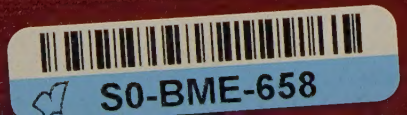
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